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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

HEALING OUR SPLIT FROM NATURE:

A Phenomenological Exploration of Wilderness Travel Leadership

By

Nicky Duenkel

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies

Edmonton, Alberta

Spring, 1994

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Nicky Duenkel

7603 109th Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 1C3

April 6, 1994

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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The undesigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled HEALING OUR SPLIT FROM NATURE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF WILDERNESS TRAVEL LEADERSHIP submitted by NICKY DUENKEL in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

HA Scott
Dr. H.A. Scott

Pat Rafferty
Dr. P.H. Rafferty

Tom Hinch
Dr. T.D. Hinch

Glenda Hanna
Dr. G. Hanna

Rick Alderman per HAS
Dr. R.B. Alderman

JM Hogg
Dr. J. Hogg for
Dr. A. Drengson
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Mountains should be climbed with as little effort as possible and without desire. The reality of your own nature should determine the speed. If you become restless, speed up. If you become winded, slow down. You climb the mountain in an equilibrium between restlessness and exhaustion. Then when you're no longer thinking ahead, each footstep isn't just a means to an end but a unique event in itself. *This* leaf has jagged edges. *This* rock looks loose. From *this* place the snow is less visible, even though closer. These are things you should notice anyway. To live only for some future goal is shallow. It's the sides of the mountains which sustain life, not the top...(Robert Pirsig)

DEDICATION

To a gentleman who is just that - a truly *gentle man*.

Although the anarchist in you may not wish to acknowledge the impact you have had on me, I can assure you that it is indeed **you** who has made this part of my journey genuinely worthwhile, Harvey.

ABSTRACT

Despite earlier warnings of the probable negative effects of our anthropocentric attitudes toward the natural world, Western society, as a whole, seems to have chosen to continue down this human-centred path. The concept of eco-tourism has emerged as a useful strategy to potentially counter this anthropocentric attitude and to encourage more of an ecocentric view of the world. The role of outdoor leaders on wilderness travel or eco-tourism excursions is, therefore, a pivotal one as it is they who deal first hand with how their participants relate to the natural world. Research is lacking, however, when it comes to identifying what the outdoor leader's role consists of in terms of promoting environmental awareness. How are truly concerned outdoor leaders attempting to fulfil their potential in this realm?

A phenomenological approach was used in order to venture through, and understand, the lived experiences of six wilderness travel leaders who were genuinely dedicated to protecting the natural world; leaders who had chosen to follow a different path than most. Thematic analyses, of both semi-structured and unstructured interviews, were performed in order to describe and interpret the co-researchers' experiences. The common higher order and first order clusters identified included: Instilling a deep sense of morality, Creating a bond with the natural world, Interaction and processing of experiences, Leader's continual growth, The unique potentials of wilderness experiences, and Making the connections.

This study revealed the potential viability of constructing an alternate reality once immersed in the wilderness environment: a wilderness reality. The findings also led to the inception of the Reality Transition Model which attempts to bridge the gap in our understanding of how individuals can achieve passage from a human centred reality to

a symbiotic reality.

Finally, suggestions are offered for both outdoor leaders of wilderness travel excursions and the educators of our future outdoor leaders, which are geared towards preparing them to best be able to realize their potential of enabling individuals to discover a path towards ecological consciousness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has been the inspiration of a myriad of people and places who, together, have enabled me to come to a deep understanding of my true nature. For the encouragement and patience you have all shared with me, over the years, while I have sought to live to the music of a different drummer - I thank you, my friends. May you all come to a meaningful understanding of your own 'inner wilderness'.

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SEEKING A PATH WITH A HEART

"All paths lead nowhere, so it is important
to choose a path that has heart"

Carlos Castaneda

I have travelled upon diverse trails, climbed many mountains, paddled along a myriad of waterways and wandered through much unfamiliar territory before arriving at my current whereabouts. Along the way I have continually tried to develop some sort of a total view of the world with which I could feel comfortable; a place where I philosophically belong. Along with my life, however, it seems to always be changing. When looking back upon this life's journey, it is not difficult for me to identify personal turning points which deepened my experience of the natural world and broadened my ecological awareness.

I have spent time in fairly remote natural areas every year since the age of eight, and have been involved in leading lengthy canoe trips for the past ten years. Reflecting back on all my wilderness expeditions brought me to the realization that each and every one had contributed, in some way, to my understanding of the natural world. One in particular, however, shines brighter than others in my memory.

As a group of eight we had spent about six days paddling through a national park. Day seven found us crossing over the park boundary, and paddling into an 'unprotected' area of wilderness for the remainder of the trip. The boundary itself was barely discernable as it was simply marked by two small signs, one on each side of the river. As the day went on, however, I began to realize that something was different. The surrounding wilderness differed in some way from what we had previously been travelling through. Although something felt different, I couldn't put my finger on exactly what it was. After a while I simply attributed it to my imagination and continued on with the day. The next morning, as we broke camp, I wandered back into the bush. Something compelled me to walk much further than I normally would have; something peculiar about this area. Having wandered through about 200 meters of dense bush, I came upon a clearing and my heart sank. I sat down on a tree stump and stared out, in disbelief, across the open land. For as far as I could see, in all directions other than from where I had come, there were no trees left standing, just a jungle of stumps, and branches. I sat there for what seemed to be an eternity, feeling somewhat of a physical pain. As I slowly returned to camp, I quickly made up a story as to why it had taken me so long to reappear. I promised myself that I would not ruin the trip for everyone else. As we travelled down the river that day I wondered how many other people before me had made the same discovery; that 200 meters in from the river's edge the entire area had been clearcut; stripped of its trees and life. And I wondered how many of them had cared.

To this day, whenever I see logging trucks commuting down the highway towards a lumber mill, I am temporarily transported back to the periphery of that clearcut. And I feel the same physical pain which I felt then; feelings of anguish for all the suffering that had been caused by our thoughtlessness. All the life in that area had the right to that space, just as we have the right to ours. Would we ever realize how much distress we had caused through our mindless behaviour?

From that day forward I felt that there could be more to my wilderness trips than simply getting out of the city for a few days. There was much greater potential there. I also began reading the work of early philosophical thinkers such as Henry Thoreau, John Muir and Aldo Leopold. As I delved deeper into this literature, I only became further dismayed with the way in which Western societies were treating the natural world from which we had come. I began to ask deeper philosophical questions of myself and of others. Many of the participants on my trips began to realize that they needed to think and question more; that we didn't have all the answers. We all grew together.

For the longest time I could not pinpoint what exactly it was about which I had become increasingly frustrated. I understood that our attitude of dominion over, and exploitation of, the natural world would only lead to its destruction; that we had somehow chosen to ignore the connections between ourselves and the rest of the natural world. We believed that our advanced technology could 'fix' the natural world. We could destroy without moral consequence since we assumed that technology could restore it. Our unique characteristics brought people to believe that we were superior to, and separate from, the natural world. I began to question whether indeed technology could 'fix' all of our destruction; whether we could truly be separate from a world on which our livelihood was dependent. Were our unique characteristics indicative of the epitome of evolution or were they just one form of excellence alongside a myriad of others (eg. the navigational skills of birds and the sonar capabilities of dolphins)? What was it that was frustrating me, that I felt uneasy about? The technology? The materialism? The arrogance?

It was not until I began to read about Arne Naess and the principles of the deep ecology movement that I found my answer. What was bothering me was humankind. Not our existence per se, but our pomposity and ignorance towards other beings on this earth; our human centredness.

I then found myself at a crossroads. In one direction the path was well worn and cleared, for most had chosen to tread there before. The other was barely discernable as it had not frequently been travelled. The first, I was sure, would eventually lead to our annihilation, and more importantly to the destruction of a greater part of the natural world. Where the other would lead I was unsure. As I began making my way down it, I hoped it would provide a different way of experiencing the world; one in which we could harmonize with the will of the natural world. I was hoping for a path with a heart.

The Recurring Questions

Why was it that we had chosen to travel upon such a human centred path? And why were we so resistant to changing paths? Throughout all the self questioning I came to realize that perhaps my purpose, or at least part of it, was to assist people in realizing the pitfalls of our typical human centredness, thereby perceiving the value of developing ecocentric (earth centred) attitudes and lifestyles. As a leader of wilderness travel excursions, I considered the promotion of environmental awareness as a very integral part of the experience. Being immersed in the wilderness would seem to be an ideal situation in which to awaken people to a possible sense of harmony with the natural world. Yet, I was not absolutely sure of what it was that I, and like-minded wilderness guides, were indeed attempting to do in this realm. What did 'promoting environmental awareness' involve? How were we going about trying to achieve our objectives? Was there a potential that was being unfulfilled?

I knew that I was capable of providing the necessary knowledge and information relating to environmental issues and concerns. But was that enough? I felt that environmental problems would only be resolved, and prevented, when people are able and willing to change their inner lives and reconcile their link with nature. I believe that these are the roots of healthy eco-action.

Need for the Journey

Two pivotal issues have emerged as being of prime concern for Canadians. First, Canada's natural heritage, which highlights a rich diversity of irreplaceable natural features including old growth forests, free flowing rivers, vast stretches of Arctic tundra, lakeshores, and coastlines is at great risk of disappearing. What remains of this once vast wilderness has deeply shaped our national identity. As civilization spreads, however, the natural world continues to vanish.

Second, an ever increasing number of people are expressing the desire to travel in the remaining, relatively undisturbed, rare and precious natural areas of Canada; to step off the beaten track and experience first hand the environment, the indigenous people, and the wilderness that live in harmony with them.

Consequently, wilderness has become serious business. Not only is wilderness diminishing worldwide, but also it is becoming the focal point of one of the fastest growing components of the travel industry: Eco-tourism.

The concept of eco-tourism is still in its infancy. Whether it will succeed or fail is a debatable issue, with notable proponents on either side. I believe that the concept had great potential, but that much of the onus lies with the wilderness travel leaders themselves, as it is they who deal first hand with how people relate to the natural world.

In order to fully understand the ecological crisis, we must do more than merely treat the symptoms. Increasingly, people are agreeing that we need to recover a sense of oneness and peace with the natural world. Hence, it is crucial that we gain a profound understanding of what wilderness travel leaders are experiencing while attempting to promote environmental awareness on their trips. This research will, therefore, consist of an in-depth investigation of what constitutes the lived experience of wilderness travel leaders, genuinely dedicated to protecting the natural world, in hopes of better understanding how to help heal our split from nature. I think we will find the journey worthwhile.

The Journey's Theoretical Direction

Individuals' everyday lives are an ordered reality; an objectified world comprised of an order of objects. These objects have been labelled and perceived as objects thereby having pre-negotiated meanings for the individuals living in a certain world. The order in everyday life reality is constructed and understood by those who dwell in it (Berger & Luckman, 1966). Accordingly, inhabitants of the same reality, have an understanding of how to act towards objects and each other. Previous experience also enables them to perceive how others will act towards them. It can, therefore, be understood that pre-established meanings of objects and actions would be shared within a culture. In everyday life situations, individuals can direct their behaviour based on pre-established meanings of what is expected of their actions (Blumer, 1969).

A wilderness travel excursion may be a situation in which participant's would be presented with a different reality. Consequently, meanings of objects and actions in their everyday lives would have to be re-negotiated; their social reality re-constructed. Patterns of behaviour are contingent upon how individuals interpret meaning towards objects.

Hence, an alternatively experienced reality would lead to new objects, new understandings and new behaviors (Blumer, 1969). The opportunity may arise, therefore, for outdoor leaders to help in establishing a newly ordered experience of reality; to shift the reality's focus from anthropocentric to more ecocentric.

The Journey's Itinerary

A Path with a Heart (Chapter I) introduced the reader to the importance of choosing a path with a heart if we are to continue our joyful journey on this Earth. The research question and need for the study were also highlighted. Exploring the Literature (Chapter II) provides a brief overview of existent literature surrounding the area of study. This included a brief review of the environmental movement, the idea of anthropocentrism, the shallow/deep ecology distinction, eco-tourism, the outdoor leader's current role in promoting environmental awareness and previous phenomenological wilderness research. The Route Chosen (Chapter III) - Since previous work surrounding this realm had left no distinct trail to follow, the reader is now introduced to the route (methodology) which I chose to pursue in order to best, and fully, explore the questions at hand. The Road Less Travelled By: The Ecocentric Ideology (Chapter IV) - Prior to exploring the co-researcher's individual experiences, it was necessary for the reader to acquire a firm grasp of the social reality these people tried to construct; their mindset. How, if at all, did the co-researchers' thoughts and actions imply ecocentrism? The Individual Treks (Chapter V) - Here the reader is introduced to each co-researcher and discovers the individual paths by which they have travelled in order to foster an environmental ethic on their wilderness trips. The Common Trek (Chapter VI) -

The common threads running through the co-researchers' efforts are explored in further depth and synthesized into the identifying features of the experience. The Transitional Path (Chapter VII) - Based on the co-researchers' experiences, insight is provided into the transition from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism by way of the Reality Transition Model. A Path with a Heart (Chapter VII) - A summary of this journey towards a path with a heart is given, along with implications for outdoor leaders and recommendations for future research. Having completed this stage of my personal journey, I paused and took the time to look back at the route taken; to reflect and ponder upon what had been learned through the process of this experience as well as to identify the study's practical and theoretical implications for the future. For as aptly expressed by Csikszentmihalyi (1988), "the mountaineer does not climb in order to reach the top of the mountain, but tries to reach the summit in order to climb" (p. 33). It is important to have an end to journey towards, but in the end it's the journey that matters.

CHAPTER II

EXPLORING THE LITERATURE

Having identified the purpose and objectives of this journey, the next step was to familiarize myself with previous explorations of the area in question. While attempting to scout the area, however, I discovered that I was aspiring to venture into a previously uncharted region. Consequently, I expanded my quest to the surrounding territory in hopes of acquiring further direction, and perhaps a better bearing, before endeavouring to venture through this untouched area. Undoubtedly, in order to find my way, I would end up climbing over mountains and wandering through valleys. I would be traversing several different ecosystems, via both land and water.

My travels through existing literature led me to explore a diversity of areas. I began by looking at the overall environmental movement which brought about the question of the anthropocentric obstacle. This, in turn, enticed me to pursue the realm of the deep ecologymovement whose platform attempts to shift our attitudes and actions away from anthropocentrism and towards ecocentrism. The concept of eco-tourism was then examined for its potential for advancing a sense of environmental concern. Finally, research pertaining to outdoor leadership and previous phenomenological studies of human experiences in wilderness were addressed.

The Environmental Movement

The environmental crisis has become a notable part of today's world. On a daily basis, we are confronted with a multitude of reports, through various forms of media, which describe and elaborate upon the plight of the environment. Overpopulation, urbanization, deforestation, desertification, pollution, and species extinction are but a few of the myriad of ingredients contributing to the devastation of the natural world. The increase in knowledge and understanding of the environment's predicament has led to a variety of concerned responses which are collectively referred to as the environmental movement (Fox, 1990).

The genesis of the environmental movement is customarily accredited to Rachel Carson and the publication of her thought provoking book, Silent Spring (1962). Carson aroused worldwide concern about the ecosystemic hazards of pesticide abuse. She cautioned that this misuse could lead to a world in which "springtime might no longer bring forth new life, only a chilling silence" (Fox, 1990, p.4). On another level, however, Carson was clearly questioning our species' arrogance and ignorance towards our true place in the larger scheme of things; that solutions to our environmental quandaries would only be found in the realization that the natural world did not merely exist for human exploitation. This was evidenced in her concluding statement, "the 'control of nature' is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and philosophy, when it was supposed that nature exists for the convenience of man" (Carson, 1962, p. 297).

This idea of rejecting human-centredness was supported, shortly thereafter, by White (1967) in his controversial paper entitled "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis". In this paper, White argued that the solution to environmental problems was to be found in our ability to relinquish our anthropocentric thoughts and not, as commonly believed, in science and technology:

> Despite Copernicus, all the cosmos rotates around our little globe. Despite

> Darwin, we are *not*, in our hearts, part of the natural process. We are superior to nature, contemptuous of it, willing to use it for our slightest whim...What we do about ecology depends on our ideas of the man-nature relationship. More science and more technology are not going to get us out of the present ecologic crisis until we find a new religion, or rethink our old one...We shall continue to have a worsening ecologic crisis until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man...Both our present science and our present technology are so tinctured with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature that no solution for ecologic crisis can be expected from them alone. (p. 1206-1207)

White (1973) re-emphasized the need to abandon the anthropocentric view of the natural world a few years later in stating that "until it is eradicated not only from our minds but also from our emotions, we shall doubtless be unable to make fundamental changes in our attitudes and actions affecting ecology" (p. 62).

Carson and White were not the first, however, to raise the idea that perhaps humans were not as important as we viewed ourselves to be; that we were not above and beyond the natural world. This train of thought was earlier put forth, for example, by such early philosophical thinkers as Henry Thoreau, John Muir, and Aldo Leopold.

Henry Thoreau's idea of the natural world was rooted in a lifetime of firsthand meetings with nature. He had the wisdom to recognize a connection between humans and the natural world - a world from which humans had come and to which we were bound. Consequently, Thoreau's thesis was that humans must not lose contact with the natural world, for we were after all a part of it (Oelschlaeger, 1991).

John Muir's attitude towards the natural world pivoted around his one thousand mile journey to the Gulf of Mexico in 1867. Muir left society behind in search of something vital to life. In doing so, he came to develop a biocentric attitude towards the Earth. In other words:

> He came to believe that humankind was merely one among many natural kinds existing within an interrelated community of life on Earth and that through a combination of religiously inspired arrogance, economic greed and sheer ignorance Lord Man was blindly destroying that web of life. (Oelschlaeger, 1991, p. 193)

Aldo Leopold's greatest contribution lies in his philosophical masterpiece Sand County Almanac (1949). Leopold's 'land ethic' was an extraordinary statement of his biocentric perspective and culminated his lifetime of action and reflection. His mindset is clearly expressed in the claim that "we are only fellow voyageurs with other creatures in the odyssey of evolution". Adopting an ecological conscience "changes the role of *Homo Sapiens* from conqueror of the land community to plain member and citizen of it". As he further stated:

> We of the industrial age boast of our control over nature. Plant or animal, star or atom, wind or river - there is no force in earth and sky which we will not shortly harness to build 'the good life' for ourselves. But what is 'the good life'? Is all the glut of power to be used for only bread and butter ends. Man cannot live by bread, or Fords alone. Are we too poor in purse or spirit to apply some of it to keep the land pleasant to see and good to live in? (Leopold, 1949, p xxxi)

It was the natural world in all its beauty and complexity which became the focal point for these three wilderness philosophers and sages. As Leopold aptly expressed:

> There are some who can live without wild things and some who cannot...Like

> winds and sunsets wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth the cost in things natural, wild and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasque-flower is a right as inalienable as free speech. (Leopold, 1949, p. xvii)

Although the question of anthropocentric attitudes towards the natural world had been raised throughout history, it was not seriously addressed by philosophers until the mid to late 1970's, at which time the area became referred to as ***ecophilosophy***. To this day, however, ecophilosophy has yet to become a mainstream philosophical consideration, which in itself seems to demonstrate that the assumption of human self-importance remains widespread (Fox, 1990).

Indeed, much of the environmental movement's efforts towards the natural world continue to perpetuate an anthropocentric perspective. For most, the dispute put forward is that the natural world must be saved for the sake of humans; that the non-human world needs to be conserved for it's instrumental value rather than for its intrinsic worth. It has, thus, become evident that "the idea that humans are the crown of creation, the source of all value, the measure of all things, is deeply embedded in our culture and consciousness" (Seed, 1985, p. 243).

The Anthropocentric Obstacle

What's wrong with anthropocentrism? An abundance of arguments exist which demonstrate the inadequacy and inconsistency of the anthropocentric outlook. First, the ideas that the world revolves around humankind and that we are biologically unrelated to other beings have been empirically demonstrated as false assumptions. We know that the Earth is not at the centre of the universe nor does it rotate around us. Neither are we as dissimilar to other beings as we may like to think. As expressed by Farb (1978):

> Scientists now know that the chasm separating humans from animals is not so wide as it once appeared. Some animal species have evolved a rich communication system, while others make and use tools, solve difficult problems, educate their young, live in complex social organizations, and apparently possess an aesthetic sense...So any definition of human uniqueness obviously would have to be based on differences in degree. (p. 12-13)

As a species we would like to believe that we are in some ways unique and, therefore, represent the end point of the evolutionary process. Seen in a different light, however, our distinctive attributes are merely part of the:

> natural marvels of the same order as the immense beaks of the toucans and hornbills, the fabulous tails of the birds of paradise, the towering necks of the giraffes, and the vividly polychromed posteriors of the baboons. Seen thus, neither as something to be condemned nor in its accustomed aspect of serious worth, the self-importance of man dissolves in laughter. (Watts, 1970, p.123)

Furthermore, it does not seem possible to delineate any one morally relevant characteristic which would include all humans and, at the same time, exclude all non-humans. Typically the criterion used in this regard has included such attributes as the ability to reason and the capacity for free will. However, these criterion exclude not only non humans but certain classes of humans as well (ie. imbeciles, infants, the senile, the comatosed). Additionally, any characteristic which would in fact encompass all of humankind (ie. being alive), would also include non humans (Fox, 1990).

Another reason for rejecting anthropocentrism is quite simply that this train of thought has led to the exploitation and devastation of the natural world. Carson (1962) and White (1967) are but two of a myriad of authors who have expressed that human centredness is at the core of today's environmental crisis. We advocate, or at least legitimate, the domination and exploitation of the natural world. Yet the current state of the environmental crisis is evidence of how little we truly know and understand about that world.

These types of criticism obviously lead to repercussions. Some question the inevitability of all human views necessarily being human centred. Based on a limited understanding of the word, anthropocentrism, it can be understood how some are hesitant to believe that human attitudes can be anything other than human centred. A more in depth comprehension of the term, however, would indicate that there can indeed be a profound difference in the degree to which one believes that humans are superior to, and separate from, the natural world, and the extent to which we support the destruction and abuse of the non human world for human purposes (Fox, 1990).

The most prominent, and misleading, critique of the ecocentric outlook is that of misanthropy; that is, equating the rejection of human centredness with the rejection of humankind. Challenging human centredness is quite different from being opposed to humankind per se (Eckersley, 1989). Equating one with the other leads to what Fox (1989) terms ***'the fallacy of misplaced misanthropy'***. For advocating an egalitarian attitude which would allow all entities "the freedom to unfold in their own way unhindered by the various forms of human domination" (Fox, 1989, p. 6) would clearly include human culture as well.

Shifting Paradigms: From Human-Centred to Earth-Centred

It has been over thirty years since Carson (1962) laid down the non-anthropocentric challenge. It would appear, however, that at the core nothing has changed. Not only have we inappropriately dealt with the environmental problems of the sixties and seventies, we are continually encountering greater and more complex issues (Evernden, 1992).

One cannot help but wonder why the state of the natural world has not improved. How is it that our enhanced awareness and knowledge of environmental problems, along with the increase in public concern has not led to the environment's recovery? It would seem that, despite earlier warnings and stated misgivings of the anthropocentric train of thought, the short term well being of some humans has prevailed as our primary concern. For some, this realization has led to a search for ways of transcending the apparent human/nature schism in Western thought. Some believe that what is needed is a paradigm shift. That is, a change in 'the construct of reality which dominates our consciousness and perception" (Devall, 1988, p.36) thereby providing an alternative way of viewing the world.

The Shallow/Deep Ecology Distinction

A dominant view of the natural world has developed in Europe and North America over the past several hundred years. This controlling outlook is based upon a human centred perspective (anthropocentrism) and asserts the following:

1. Humans are above, superior to and outside of the natural world. In this way, humans dominate nature.

2. The Earth is seen primarily as a collection of natural resources for human consumption.

3. Most of these resources are seen as infinite. Those that are finite are replaceable and can be recreated by our technology.

4. There is an overriding faith that humans, since they are superior, will survive.

5. The ultimate goal of this worldview is the complete conquest and domination of the natural world (Devall & Sessions, 1985).

Maintaining these attitudes towards the natural world seems to have led to growing environmental problems. Although attempts have been made to address these problems, the main assumptions of this outlook have not been challenged. These efforts have remained very **'shallow'** or 'reform' in their approach. The idea of conservation itself is to conserve part of the natural world for the benefit of future generations (of humans). Many of the reform arguments are convincing, however, they are only concerned with the short range well being of some humans. In Naess' (1989) words, the goal of reform environmentalism has always been "the health and affluence of people in developed countries" (p. 28). Thus, proposed solutions have still been based on anthropocentric points of view.

Udall (1962) warns us of the potential risks of this perspective, in his book The Quiet Crisis:

> History tells us that earlier civilizations have declined because they did not learn to live in harmony with the land. Our successes in space and our triumphs of technology hold a hidden danger: as modern man increasingly arrogates to

> himself dominion over the physical environment, there is the risk that his false pride will cause him to take the resources of the earth for granted - and lose all reverence for the land. (p. vii)

In 1973, Arne Naess attempted to describe a deeper, more spiritual approach to the natural world which he termed the ***Deep Ecology*** movement. It is based on ecocentric assumptions rather than anthropocentric ones. It is a grass-roots political movement which endeavours to cultivate an ecological consciousness or ***ecosophy*** (*eco*, for earth or land and *sophia*, for wisdom - Earth wisdom). Thus, Naess and other similarly minded visionaries have sought a different way of seeing the world which draws wisdom from the Earth, Native Americans, and other primal cultures who appear to have lived in harmony with the land. This approach is an uncompromising stand against the main thrusts of our modern, technocratic society.

In an attempt to summarize the foundations of what binds supporters of the deep ecology movement together, the following platform was generated. It is comprised of eight common points to direct those who posit that the Earth's ecological problems cannot be remedied solely by technological quick fix solutions. From a practical standpoint this may involve attempting to view a "particular problem from the point of view of other interests (ie. other species, or ecosystems themselves) or it can be opening to a full scale critique of our civilization, seeking out false conceptions of reality at the core" (Naess, 1990, p.4). The principles involved are:

1. The flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth has intrinsic value. The value of non-human life forms is independent of the usefulness these may have for narrow human purposes.

> 2. Richness and diversity of life forms are values in themselves and contribute to the flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth.
>
> 3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
>
> 4. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
>
> 5. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.
>
> 6. Significant change of life conditions for the better requires change in policies. These affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures.
>
> 7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating *life quality* (dwelling in situations of intrinsic value) rather than adhering to a high standard of living. There will be a profound awareness for the difference between big and great.
>
> 8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes. (Naess, 1989, p.29)

This platform is not meant to advocate a specific set of guidelines for action but rather a general orientation.

Hence, the essence of the deep ecology movement is to ask deeper, more searching, questions about human life, society, and the natural world. Essentially, this requires asking 'why' and 'how', where others do not, in hopes of reaching the cause of the crisis rather than merely treating its symptoms. "The deeper stream addresses questions which draw us to major realignment in our self and in our thinking and calls us to long-range solutions from an ecological perspective" (Devall, 1988, p. 20-21).

Followers of Deep Ecology, therefore, has the negative task of critiquing and dismantling the dominant anthropocentric view of reality, as well as the positive and constructive task of presenting an attitude of ecocentric egalitarianism which will make identification between humans and non-humans easier (Eckersley, 1989).

A pivotal aspect of Naess's own Ecosophy-T is the principle of **Self-realization**. Naess encourages identification with the natural world so that our egotistical self may become a part of a much greater ecological Self (with a capital S). The illusion that the self is a separate ego, housed in a bag of skin, which faces a universe of physical objects which are alien is dismissed (Watts, 1966). Self-realization is an attempt to expand one's sense of self to include other people, other species, and the natural world itself. In viewing the natural world as an extension of ourselves we are less likely to mindlessly damage it, for by doing so we would inevitably be hurting ourselves. The realization of Self does not, however, mean that the individual self, or ego, is dissolved in the larger Self. "The diversity of different individuals remains as we share and shape our connections to the larger" (Naess, 1989, p. 9). Self-realization is an active process and not a destination one can reach, for total Self-realization would demand the realization of all (Naess, 1989). Consequently, the real work, as Snyder suggested, is "to make the world as real as it is, and to find ourselves as real as we are within it" (1980, p. 81).

It is my belief that these alternative principles and ideas may best be conveyed when totally immersed in the natural world. A wilderness travel excursion which temporarily separates us from our daily societal pressures, norms and expectations may constitute an ideal environment in which to reflect upon these alternative ideas (LaChapelle, 1978; Naess, 1989).

Wilderness Travel and Eco-tourism

Wilderness travel is by no means new, or foreign, to humans. Long before the concept of wilderness even came into being, travelling the Canadian wilderness by canoe, snowshoe, or on foot was a way of life. Wilderness travel itself is, thus, inextricably intertwined with our Canadian heritage.

Adventurers of all kinds have since retraced the original routes of the fur traders, and followed the portage trails and complex water ways of the native people. Recently an increasing number of people are expressing the desire to travel in the remaining, relatively undisturbed, rare and precious natural areas of Canada; to step off the beaten track and experience first hand the environment, the indigenous people, and the wilderness that live in harmony with them (Ashton, 1986; CEAC, 1991; Marsh, 1986).

Wilderness has consequently become serious business. For not only is wilderness diminishing worldwide, it is also becoming the focal point of one of the fastest growing components of the travel industry: Eco-tourism (Ranney, 1990).

Eco-tourism Defined

Current literature proposed several definitions of eco-tourism. Ceballos-Lascurian (1987) defined eco-tourism as:

Travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated areas with the specific

> objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas. (cited in Boo, 1990, p.xiv)

Wight (1992) communicated a definition which emerged from a National Workshop on Eco-tourism: "Eco-tourism is an enlightening nature travel experience that contributes to conservation of the ecosystem, while respecting the integrity of host communities" (1993, p. 3).

One of the most comprehensive definitions was provided by Dr. James Butler and discussed in A Protected Areas Vision for Canada (CEAC, 1991). His interpretation of eco-tourism encompassed the following eight characteristics:

> 1. It must promote positive environmental ethics - fostering preferred behaviour in its participants.
>
> 2. It does not degrade the resource. There is no consumptive erosion of the natural environment visited. While sport hunting and fishing may be counted under the broad heading of wildland (green) tourism, they are classified under the division of adventure tourism rather than ecotourism.
>
> 3. It concentrates on intrinsic rather than extrinsic values. Facilities and services may "facilitate" the encounter with the intrinsic resource; they never become attractions in their own right, nor do they distract from the natural attraction itself.
>
> 4. It is biocentric [ecocentric] rather than homocentric [anthropocentric] in philosophy. Eco-tourists enter the environment accepting it on its terms, not expecting it to change or be modified for their convenience.
>
> 5. It must benefit the wildlife and environment. The question of whether or not the environment (not just people) has accrued "benefits" may be measured in a range

of ways - socially, economically, scientifically, managerially, or politically. If the environment has not at least achieved a net benefit toward its sustainability and ecological integrity, then the activity is not eco-tourism.

6. It is first-hand experience with the natural environment. Movies and zoological parks do not constitute an ecotourism experience. Visitor centres and interpretive slide shows are included when they direct people to a first-hand experience.

7. It has an "expectation of gratification" that is measured in terms of education and/or appreciation, rather than in thrill seeking or physical achievement; the latter being more characteristic of adventure tourism.

8. It has a high cognitive and affective experiential dimension. Ecotourism involves a high level of preparation and knowledge from both leaders and participants, and the satisfaction derived from the experiences is felt and expressed strongly in emotional and inspirational ways. (CEAC, 1991, p. 42)

Recent studies demonstrated that Canadian eco-tourists are indeed attracted to wilderness areas which highlight natural features such as mountains, rivers and streams, as well as historical sites and local crafts. Additionally, these individual's social motivations for travelling included learning about the natural world, living simpler less complicated lifestyles, and getting away from their jobs (Eagles, 1992).

Potential Advantages of Eco-tourism

The potential promise of eco-tourism is reflected within the above definitions. Proponents of this type of tourism claim that it can play a significant role in providing incentives for nature conservation by stimulating an economy and, at the same time, establishing and preserving a system of protected areas; areas which might otherwise be developed or devastated through improper management or short term exploitive resource development. Harrison (1990) epitomizes this concept in saying that "the overriding opinion of eco-tour operators is that the more people you get into an area, the more people know about it, the more people appreciate it, the more people who'll vote for its continuing support" (p.10). Similarly, Sutton (1990) suggests that "trends toward wildlife tourism, both domestic and foreign are welcome, for there is no better way to communicate the worth of a country's natural wealth than to allow others to experience it first hand" (p.15).

Eco-tourism is flourishing in certain areas, providing positive impacts on local economies as well as stimulating cultural and environmental preservation. Parcs des Volcans in Rwanda was established for several reasons: to provide sanctuary for the gorillas and to stop the clearing of forests which was destroying the gorilla's habitat along with the watershed on which agriculture is dependent. It has indeed achieved its goals. Additionally, the park has become the third largest source of Rwanda's income (Boo, 1990).

Costa Rica is receiving world wide attention for its protected areas which preserve a diversity of natural attractions. One of these attractions being the assortment and sheer numbers of wildlife. This diversity is a result of the inter-continental migration due to Costa Rica being the bridge between two continents (Boo, 1990). The Costa Rican government has in fact developed a national conservation strategy which in effect attempts to ensure the future success of eco-tourism (Romeril, 1989).

The creation of Rathambhor National Park in India, spurred by eco-tourism interests, has permitted the once endangered tiger population to double. The welfare of other wildlife, and the ecosystem in general, are also improving (Sutton, 1990).

Potential Disadvantages of Eco-tourism

There does, however, exist some opposition to the concept of eco-tourism. The Great Barrier Reef in Australia, trekking trails in Nepal and Canada's Point Pelee National Park are examples of eco-tourist areas which are demonstrating signs of degradation as a result of the imposing presence of humans. As Aldo Leopold (1949) once stated, "all conservation of wilderness is self-defeating, for to cherish we must see and fondle, and when enough have fondled, there is no wilderness left to cherish" (p.101). This suggests that the negative consequences of eco-tourism may outweigh, or at least nullify, the positive ones.

Eco-tourism is somewhat limited in its economic potential. Although eco-tourism is meant to benefit the host nation economically, this does not always occur. Money spent to provide the eco-tourism experience does not always remain a part of the host country's economy. Richard Butler (1989) refers to this phenomenon as "leakage". The involvement of local people would aid significantly in attaining eco-tourism's goal of benefiting the host nation economically.

Additionally, limitations exist in that the average eco-tourist has a low tolerance for crowding (Ziffer, 1989). Thus, the eco-tourist will endeavour to find other opportunities for solitude if the eco-tourism industry is allowed to grow excessively in order to accommodate the masses. Equally, areas visited by eco-tourists are characteristically pristine and fragile, allowing for a relatively low carrying capacity (Butler, R., 1989). Large numbers of eco-tourists would only lead to environmental degradation.

Limitations to eco-tourism also exist from an environmental standpoint. Souvenir hunting, the raping of attractive and sensitive natural features, is resulting in detrimental effects. The Great Barrier Reef in Australia is a leading example. Equally, when locals and eco-tourists compete for scarce resources, the environment ultimately suffers. This was evidenced in the competition for scarce wood supplies in Nepal, between the trekkers (using it to heat water for showers) and the Nepalese (needing it to heat their homes and use their stoves) (Boo, 1990).

The only way to avoid these, and other, environmental impacts is to assure that eco-tourism developments are well planned, managed and monitored. Otherwise we may inadvertently "kill the goose that laid the golden egg" (Fediow, 1988, p.5).

In final analyses, it is crucial to have realistic expectations of eco-tourism. Otherwise, its limitations may lead to catastrophic impacts on the wilderness. Butler, R. (1989) suggests asking the following question before attempting any eco-tourist development: "Is alternative tourism an appropriate form of development, not instead of mass tourism, but in its own right?" (p.16). In other words, even though there is evidence that eco-tourism may help promote environmental preservation, if a certain environment is not being jeopardized then, perhaps it is best left alone. In some cases eco-tourism is a viable economic alternative. In British Columbia, for example, eco-tourism has been shown to provide more jobs over a longer period of time than the logging of that same area (Johnson, 1986). In this way, eco-tourism can compete with resource extraction for the use of wildland. The reality is, however, that eco-tourism may not be best under all circumstances. By acknowledging eco-tourism's potential limitations and setting realistic expectations, eco-tourism may still conceivably realize its ambitions. Although the concept of eco-tourism is not a panacea it may be a realistic and useful strategy.

Eco-tourism: Environment or Economics

For many, eco-tourism's objectives present somewhat of a paradox: protecting the environment on the one hand, and contributing to the economy on the other. Is it not our species' obsession with an economic model of growth that has, to a great extent, led to the onslaught of the destruction of the environment in the first place? Whether this disparity of objectives can ever be reconciled is a debatable issue, with impressive proponents on either side of the controversy.

As a wilderness guide, who firmly believes in educating towards greater environmental awareness and appreciation, I find myself living in the midst of a similar and related dispute. I would like to believe that preserving the environment is at the forefront of everyone's personal ambitions. Unfortunately, that sort of naivete will only get you so far before you realize that, for many, eco-tourism is merely a buzzword and more and more people are just jumping onto the passing bandwagon for a free ride.

Today's consumers are increasingly representative of a 'green' market. That is to say that more and more people are becoming ecologically sensitive and displaying a genuine concern for the environment. Hence, there is little doubt that the word 'eco', attached to any travel package, will likely attract greater interest, attention and sales (Wight, 1992). Consequently, the travel market has recently become inundated with organizations offering eco-tours, eco-adventures, eco-travel and so on; many of which are simply yesterday's adventure travel packages with relatively few superficial and short term modifications, if any at all. A number of these companies display little true concern for the environment. Their actions towards the environment seem to be more in response to what may be seen as 'politically correct' as opposed to what they sincerely believe.

It is beyond me how some outfitters, and guides as well, can be so short-sighted not to realize that by not taking care of, and giving back, to the environment, they are inevitably hurting themselves as it is this same environment on which their livelihood depends. Perhaps it is believed that the consequences of the neglect may not present themselves in their lifetime, so that makes it acceptable?!

More often than not 'eco' seems to have become representative of **eco**nomics rather than **eco**logical. Just as the proliferation of 'green' products on the supermarket shelves was at one time fairly suspect, so too now is the propagation of the prefix 'eco' in travel brochures and advertisements (Wight, 1992).

This is not to say that no one in the travel industry has the environment at heart. Certainly some organizations do, although it is often difficult to tell the trees from the forest. In a business world which revolves endlessly around the ultimate dollar sign, they should be commended for their sincere efforts. If you are one of the many sifting through the travel magazines and brochures searching for a real eco-tourist experience - look very carefully and ask a lot of questions: Does the trip involve an educational component which advocates the recognition of the inherent values of the wilderness? Does the outfitter promote a code of ethics for responsible behaviour towards the natural and cultural environments? Do all the guides have a personal commitment to uphold that ethic? What is the company's policy towards waste disposal and recycling? Are long term benefits (ie. conservation, social, cultural, economic) provided for both the wilderness and local communities?

The near future will present a need for developing some sort of formal or informal standards for the travel industry, regulating the use of the word eco-tourism. Standards which will reflect the genuine intentions of the concept: Travelling in a relatively undisturbed natural area to learn about the natural world; to learn how to tread lightly on the land as well as to give back to it in our daily lives; and to be with others who share the same concerns and appreciation for the environment.

Perhaps it is again my naivete that leads me to believe that these disparate objectives can in fact be complementary; that a symbiotic relationship can exist between the conservation of the wilderness and what remains a money-making activity. I would maintain that the negative aspects of this paradoxical relationship can be avoided. But first, everyone's heart has to be in the right place and preserving the wilderness in our souls. In the end what we do to the environment, we do to ourselves.

Outdoor Leadership and Environmental Awareness

Outdoor leaders are vital to any wilderness experience since it is they who deal first hand with how the participants relate to the natural world (Ranney, 1990). The predicament in which the natural world finds itself today intimates that perhaps outdoor leaders are not being as productive as they could be in their role of enlightening and educating the public about today's environmental concerns. As Arcury and Johnson (1987) state, "public environmental knowledge remains at an alarmingly low level even though the environmental movement has been highly publicized for over two decades" (p.36).

Research indicates that first hand experiences of the natural world, both educational and recreational, do indeed play an important role in influencing higher levels of environmental concern and activism with participants (Cuthbertson, 1992; Sia et. al, 1986; Tanner, 1970). Additionally, research attests to the fact that the leaders, of both adventure and environmentally based programs, need to be educating individuals in the appropriate use of the environment as well as in the practices and procedures for its ongoing protection. Priest (1986) maintains that:

> Adventure approaches need to deal with environmental issues if they are to protect the setting they treasure so greatly. Environmental approaches need to develop confident individuals who solve problems cooperatively and who can make sound judgements regarding the stewardship of our planet (p.15).

Hence, outdoor leaders involved in eco-tourism ventures, or other types of wilderness travel experiences, necessarily have to be concerned with this issue as well, seeing as they are endeavouring to merge adventure travel and environmental awareness.

The literature also reports that outdoor leaders themselves do perceive the significance of the environmental component within their programs. Priest (1984) found that the participants of the eleventh annual conference of The Association for Experiential Education placed environmental protection as their second major concern, immediately following reduction of wilderness accidents. This same group, when asked to state their level of agreement with ten leadership skills, placed "convey the importance of environmental harmony" second to "possess important traits necessary to succeed", and prior to "be capable of instructing the adventure activity".

Similarly, in a survey of 120 selected active leaders, participants identified areas of importance for outdoor leaders in the following order: 1)group building,

2) challenge/adventure activities, 3) outdoor education and environmental education. "Nature oriented activities" and "environmental interpretation" were placed fifth and sixth respectively (Buell, 1983).

This brief review indicates that outdoor leaders should, and do, have an important role to play in the development of environmentally aware and active citizens. The same literature has also brought many authors to conclude that outdoor leaders, as a whole, are not meeting their potential in the area of environmental education (Hanna, 1988; Knapp, 1980; Yambert, 1980). Yambert (1980) proclaimed that outdoor leaders have been ineffective in stimulating behavioral changes. Henschel (1985) pronounced that Canadian outdoor leaders have identified a need for more and better environmental training. According to Knapp (1980), outdoor leaders have been successful at teaching isolated facts. However, the teaching of values has been ineffective and, thus, has not precipitated behavioral changes towards ecologically sound lifestyles.

In closely scrutinizing the existing research on the content of outdoor leadership training courses, as well as those studies describing the competencies which outdoor leaders require, one comes to realize that even though most programs identify an environmental component they deal primarily with minimal impact camping techniques, basic ecological concepts and backcountry conservation practices (Cockrell, 1991; Curtis, 1992; Ford, 1988; Green, 1982; Hampton & Cole, 1988; Phipps & Cash, 1990; Priest, 1987; 1989). Priest (1987), for example, in performing a content analysis of outdoor leadership preparation literature, identified 14 key components of an effective outdoor leader. One of these areas was environmental skills which was described as "the skills necessary to prevent negative damage to the natural surroundings and ecology" (p. 5). Similarly, in another study which examined the characteristics of effective leaders and leadership programs, Ford stated:

> The area of natural resource competency means that every leader must have an awareness of weather, minimum impact, and basic ecological principles before

> attempting to take a group outdoors. In addition, various amounts of familiarity with plants, animals, rocks, the quantity and quality of water, and the ability to share the knowledge with the follower should be part of every outdoor leader's competence. Knowledge about the resource alone, however, is not enough, for the leader of people must be able to understand the changes in the weather in order to protect the participants from heat or cold. Further, unless the leader understands the interrelationships of the plants, animals, soils, and water, there is no real understanding of any one resource. Minimum impact of the participants on the land is vital. (p. 11)

It becomes evident, therefore, that little educational emphasis has been placed on enabling outdoor leaders to form and articulate an ecocentric world view; or on empowering them to facilitate this transition in others.

Overall, outdoor leaders' training, in the area of environmental awareness, consists **predominantly** of adopting and conveying an 'environmental ethic'. In other words, outdoor leaders are encouraged to communicate a series of environmentally friendly procedures which will enable participants to tread lightly on the land, and understand basic ecological principles, should they partake in any further wilderness experiences. I would suggest, along with others (LaChappelle, 1978; Ranney, 1990; Naess, 1989), that first hand experiences of the natural world have the potential of facilitating a change in our perceptions of that world. Hence, outdoor leaders in wilderness travel situations, especially those deemed to be eco-tourism, could potentially educate and enlighten their participants far beyond their traditionally perceived role, that is to move towards the adoption of an ecocentric world view.

Phenomenological Research in the Wilderness

Western societies tend to view the natural world through a utility conscious, instrumental lens. The way in which we construct our reality influences our perceptions of the natural world. A conservationist and a developer, for example, experience reality differently. A conservationist who views the forest as a whole, a gestalt, in talking about 'the heart of the forest' is not alluding to the geometrical centre. The developer, on the other hand, sees quantities of trees which would not seriously be diminished by the construction of a road. If necessary, the developer could suggest that the road does not traverse through the centre of the forest, thereby saving 'the heart' (Naess, 1989). It is evident from this scenario that the conservationist and the developer see and experience reality differently. A phenomenological approach may, therefore, be valuable for the development of consciousness of a non-instrumental, non-utilitarian content of the immediate experience of the natural world (Naess, 1989). Few published studies to date have explored the wilderness experience from a qualitative stand point.

Morrison (1986) and Richley (1992) both performed phenomenological investigations of wilderness solitude. Although these two studies used different phenomenological methods some similar themes were identified (change in time perspective/time, appreciation of relationships/balance of communion and solitude, attunement to senses and nature/knowledge of self) and, thus, similar conclusions drawn. Both these studies help further our understanding of the human-nature relationship as well as the potential for therapy in wilderness solo expeditions.

Segal (1988) interviewed six individuals, who spent extended periods of time in the wilderness, in order to explore the nature and meaning of the 'communing with nature' experience. The phenomenological methodology demonstrated that heightened sensory awareness led to a personal and emotional catharsis for each of the participants involved. This catharsis, in turn, aided participants in developing a sense of oneness with something larger than their physical selves. This process of growth was acknowledged as being very positive and somewhat therapeutic.

In another phenomenological study, Walsh (1989) explored the experiences of eight women who regularly partook in wilderness activities. Essentially, the wilderness was found to be a therapeutic medium through which these women learned to deal with the often difficult and necessary transitions of adult life.

Legault's (1991) phenomenological work explored the ways in which one may connect with nature, with hopes of increasing this interconnectedness. Data for the study was collected through the use of self-report, interviews and participant observation. Small groups of participants were taught how to increase their awareness of their inner-states through meditation and movement awareness activities. They were then led to interact with nature through movement in hopes of gaining a sense of contentedness with the elements of the natural world. Participants objectified their experiences through drawing and short descriptive passages.

Most recently, Potter (1993) ventured into the realm of weekend wilderness experiences. Through both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, Potter explored the values and meanings attributed to short term wilderness experiences by large groups of university students. Ten common themes were discovered (appreciation of, and connectedness to, the natural environment, personal calming--solitude, coping with the challenge, heightened intrapersonal awareness, perceived threats to personal well-being, change in emotions, disclosure of selves, closeness to others through shared common experiences, uncovering 'real' others, and cooperation) which contributed to a better understanding of how to maximize both intra and interpersonal growth on weekend wilderness experiences.

While none of the aforementioned phenomenological wilderness studies focussed on the outdoor leader's experience of promoting environmental awareness they do, nevertheless, provide insight into an appropriate path to follow in order to explore human experiences of the natural world.

In conclusion, it quickly became evident that few people had roamed in, or even around, the area which I wished to traverse. The preparation stage of an excursion is often undervalued. Gaining a more in-depth understanding of the adjoining fields, however, served to strengthen my commitment towards this journey by highlighting the lack of understanding and, thus, underscoring the need for this expedition. It appeared that, although apprehensions towards the anthropocentric outlook had been voiced, most chose not to heed the warning. The Deep Ecology movement which emphasizes our need for a new world view. The advent of eco-tourism, an enlightening nature travel experience which contributes to conservation, may have the potential of providing an avenue via which this alternative approach could be communicated. In terms of promoting environmental awareness, outdoor leaders are currently directed to teach individuals how to tread lightly on the land. While this is necessary, the state of today's environment would indicate that it is insufficient. Have all outdoor leaders limited their efforts in this domain to physical impacts on the land? Or are some, for whom living in harmony with the rest of the natural world is deeply ingrained into their world view, attempting to do more?

This journey through related literature also provided me with further ideas as to how I could navigate my way through the uncharted terrain. The next step, therefore, was to map out the strategy and establish the best route to be followed in order to arrive at the prescribed destination. There was little doubt, however, that while venturing through unfamiliar territory I would encounter unexpected and unforseen challenges which would lead to further inquiry.

CHAPTER III

THE ROUTE CHOSEN

The nature of the research question, the purpose of the study, the current understanding of the phenomena, and constraints of the subjects and setting, guide the researcher in selecting an appropriate method of inquiry (Field & Morse, 1985).

The natural science ideal is that of examining measurable objects by methods contrived to prove causal relationships by observable and repeatable results, while maintaining the utmost independence from the researcher (Colaizzi, 1978). In the past, this experimental method has been applied to both physical phenomena and human behaviour. However, the very objectivity needed to secure dependable information in the natural science world would seem to eliminate the element of experience which is most necessary for an authentic understanding of human behaviour. When exploring human experiences, qualitative methods allow for a better understanding, by descriptively illustrating the underlying structures of a specific phenomenon.

Natural Science vs Human Science

The philosophical differences underlying the natural and human science approaches are rooted in their disparate understandings of the nature of human beings.

Based on Cartesian dualism, natural science declares a separation of mind from body, subject from object. The inherent emphasis is placed on the material, objective world. Therefore, psychology, as a natural science, focuses on observable behaviour and, thus, human behaviour is reduced to an 'object' level. As a human science, psychology rejects the Cartesian split of mind from body. The overriding presupposition is that the human being is more than simply another object. Whereas the natural science researcher uses extraspection and reaches conclusions from the outside in; human science attempts to understand the meaning of the human's life world through an introspective approach (Becker, 1986).

After carefully considering the distinctions between natural and human science, the phenomenological approach was chosen for this study.

The Phenomenological Method

"Phenomenology is a method which allows us to contact phenomena as we actually live them out and experience them" (Husserl, 1931). Hence, phenomenology was developed as an alternative to natural science.

Phenomenological research methods endeavour to enhance our understanding of the structures in experience by describing their parts and their relationships among them. It is a descriptive methodology which is concerned with acquiring a deeper understanding of another's experience and "depends almost exclusively on the power of language for communication" (Giorgi, 1975, p.100). *It was my aim, through adopting a phenomenological approach, to understand the structure underlying the experience of outdoor leaders who are dedicated to protecting the wilderness, in hopes of better understanding how to heal our split from nature.*

Phenomenology is a descriptive methodology, therefore, I did not set out to prove a hypothesis or explain why the experience is experienced as it is. I aspired only to explore, describe, and seek out the meaning of the co-researchers' wilderness experiences. According to VanManen (1984):

> Phenomenological research aims to establish a renewed contact with original experience. True thinking on a lived experience is a thoughtful reflective grasping of what it is that renders this or that particular experience its special significance. Phenomenological research is the study of lived experience, it is the study of the lifeworld - the world as we immediately experience it rather than as we conceptualize, categorize and theorize about it. Phenomenology aims to come to a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our experiences. Phenomenological research is a search for the fullness of living (p.37).

This idea is further supported by Berger and Luckman (1966) in their assertion that, "The method we consider best suited to clarify the foundations of knowledge in everyday life is that of phenomenological analysis, a purely descriptive method and, as such, 'empirical' but not 'scientific'" (p.20).

Phenomenological research on a certain phenomenon is never complete but always in process. Researchers may view the phenomenon from different perspectives and illuminate various aspects of the phenomenon depending on the position from which they are coming. There is great value to be found in multi-perspectival understandings of a particular phenomenon. "This is the existential meaning of the phenomenological thesis, that research can never exhaust the investigated phenomenon, that research can never be complete" (Colaizzi, 1978, p.70). As expressed by Valle & King (1978):

> The perceived phenomenon is analogous to a mineral crystal which appears to have many different sizes and shapes depending on the intensity, angle and color of the light which strikes its surfaces. Only after seeing these different reflections

and varied appearances on repeated occasions does the constant, unchanging crystalline structure become known to us (p. 15).

Bracketing

Phenomenologists are thought to be breaking from the traditional presuppositions of neutrality, control and separation of subject and object. It is, therefore, critical that we be aware of, and able to articulate, our biases and predispositions towards the phenomenon. As the phenomenon is one of which I myself have a lived understanding, these past experiences and foreunderstandings will undoubtedly influence how I see the experience of others. According to Becker (1986), "once aware of these pre-understandings, I am more able to set them aside and am less likely to impose them upon the research participants" (p.114).

How is it that I came to study this question?

My experiences **in** and **of** the wilderness have helped me to free myself of the notion that humans are separate from the natural world - that we are somehow superior to all other living creatures. In reality, I believe that we are connected with all the natural processes surrounding us. The natural world is inextricably a part of us, and we are a part of it. We create and sustain our human life-world by attributing meaning to it. Hence, my feeling is that we must somehow discard our anthropocentric attitudes and take direct action to help preserve the natural world; we need to renegotiate the 'taken for granted' meanings which we bestow upon the natural world.

As an outdoor leader of wilderness travel excursions, I feel that it is an integral part of my job to try to awaken people's understandings of our connection to the natural world, to try to mend our split from nature, and get us moving toward right eco-action. My experience with attempting to do this, however, has left me frustrated. I chose, therefore, to take an in-depth look at other outdoor leaders, who are also dedicated to preserving the natural world, in hopes of emerging with a clearer and better understanding of how to restore our split from nature.

What preconceptions and foreunderstandings do I bring to my exploration of this question?

- The Canadian Wilderness is becoming scarce, and cannot be protected by laws and boundaries alone. The actions of our daily urban lives affect the natural world.
- The natural world is not just a resource for human consumption.
- Those who travel in wildlands must care for them.
- A wilderness travel experience could entail stepping out of the reality where people believe they are separate from, and superior to, the natural world.
- A wilderness travel trip is an fitting situation in which new views of the natural world may be contemplated and are an ideal time for reflection.
- Immersion into the wilderness may grant us the opportunity to alter our perceptions of the natural world by renegotiating our 'taken for granted' meanings. In doing so, individuals may be afforded the opportunity to bestow new meanings thereby moving beyond their taken for granted ordered reality.
- Outdoor leaders should be models of caring and curiosity.
- People often take the natural world for granted.
- A wilderness travel experience can be a powerful reminder of natural world's infinite sources of wonder.

- It is essential that outdoor leaders be interested in this "wonder" if they are to awaken it in others.

- Learning in the wilderness can play an important role in educating ecologically responsible citizens.

- The ultimate salvation of what remains of the Canadian wilderness lies in our ability to universally care for Earth.

- Outdoor leaders should be educating towards ecocentrism and away from anthropocentrism.

Explicitly stating these suppositions will grant a greater degree of freedom for the data to speak for themselves, enabling a clearer understanding of the phenomenon as it is represented by the co-researchers. Readers are also provided with a framework from which to evaluate the validity of the data (Wertz, 1984).

Co-Researchers

> The point of phenomenological research is to borrow other people's experiences and their reflections in order to be better able to come to an understanding of the deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience in the context of the whole experience (VanManen, 1984, p.55).

Since the phenomenological approach posits a relationship of co-constituency among those involved in the process of discovery, the term "co-researcher" is adopted in place of "subject". They explore the question together, entering and affecting each others' world.

Several authors have written about the selection of co-researchers (Becker, 1986;

Van Kaam, 1966). It is generally agreed upon that co-researchers should be selected based upon their depth of experience with the phenomenon in question, their ability to express that experience, and their willingness to explore the experience with the researcher. These authors also agree that the number of co-researchers varies depending on the nature of the study. Between one and ten are recommended for phenomenological inquiries. Essentially, the number of co-researchers is based on how many it takes to sufficiently illuminate the phenomenon. It is imperative to keep in mind that sampling theory is not a basis for selection of co-researchers since we are not intending to satisfy criteria for statistical generalization, but to understand human experience (Polkinghorne, 1979).

For this study, the cardinal criteria for the selection of co-researchers was that they be outdoor leaders, involved in wilderness travel excursions and, for whom preserving the wilderness was deeply entrenched into their personal values and beliefs. They had to be able to provide a full description of their lived experiences of trying to promote environmental awareness in wilderness travel situations. These co-researchers had to be aware of, and able to identify and describe, their various experiences, perceptions, thoughts, insights and feelings.

The six co-researchers who participated in this study, four male and two female, ranged from 22 to 40 years of age (average 33) and all had university level educations - two at the undergraduate and four at the graduate level. Only one had an undergraduate degree in physical education, while two had done graduate work in the area. All confessed, however, that their formal education had extremely little, if anything at all, do with their practices and actions as outdoor leaders. Their experience as outdoor leaders varied between 6 and 17 years (average 11.5), and they had all led trips in both educational and recreational settings. All had worked for companies claiming to be offering eco-tourism experiences, although several felt that eco-tourism objectives were not truly within the company's mandate. Information was also collected relating to subscriptions to environmental journals/magazines and membership with environmental organizations. However, all the co-researchers acknowledged that their subscription and membership status was purely dependent upon their financial situations and thus varied significantly from year to year.

Procedure

The study evolved in the following sequence:

1. The co-researchers were located.

2. The introductory interview served to establish rapport, discuss the nature of the project, and receive consent (Appendix A). Brief demographic information was also collected at this time (Appendix B). Additionally, each co-researcher was subjected to a semi-structured interview in which they discussed and elaborated upon their personal view of the world and our relationship with it (see Appendix C). The co-researchers had to display an ecocentric perspective of the world in order to continue participation in the study. Arrangements for the second interview session were also made at this time. A portable cassette recorder was used to provide verbatim transcript of the co-researcher's descriptions.

3. The second individual interviews transpired at an appointed time and place. At this time, an unstructured interview took place in which the co-researchers were asked to provide an in depth description of their experiences of promoting environmental

awareness on wilderness travel trips (see Appendix C). A portable cassette recorder was used once again.

4. Audio tapes were transcribed verbatim.

5. A thematic analysis was performed on these transcripts, in order to ascertain the presence of patterns in the experience.

6. Copies of the thematic analysis and verbal description were presented to the co-researchers, in the third interview session, to be read and validated as an appropriate representation of their understanding of their experience.

7. Any additional relevant information acquired during this third interview was integrated into the final results.

Thematic Analysis

The phenomenological analysis of the descriptive data for this study was be based on Colaizzi's (1978) description of the process:

1. The first step in the procedure was to read through the transcripts in order to gain a feel for the language and perspective of the co-researcher.

2. Transcripts were then re-read, on a line to line basis. Significant statements, which refer specifically to the event in question, were selected.

3. These significant statements were then re-read with the intent of discovering the meaning behind the words. It must be emphasised at this point, that phenomenological analysis focuses on the meaning rather than simply the content of the statements. This is where a creative risk arises. The researcher must be true to the data and their

significance without allowing their bracketed preconceptions to override the co-researcher's experience.

4. Themes were then placed into natural groups or clusters.

5. The next step was to integrate all of the elements of the experience into a thorough description of the experience.

6. The above procedures were repeated for each co-researcher.

7. These descriptions were then reduced as far as possible into a concise statement of the identifying features of the experience.

8. Verification is the seventh and final step in Colaizzi's analytical procedure. Having the co-researcher examine the written interpretation is one method of testing the correctness of the description and interpretation of the experience.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED BY:

The Ecocentric Ideology

The forthcoming narrative is meant to provide insight into the value and belief framework fostered by the co-researchers involved in this study. An understanding of their ecocentric way of viewing the world, as opposed to the anthropocentric, or human centred, worldview typically held by most members of Western societies, is essential in order to fully grasp and appreciate their perspectives and experiences. Thus, their common ideology is synthesised and portrayed here under the guise of a fictional character named Sam. The worldview expressed by Sam is ideal in nature. It is critical to note at this point that although the co-researchers have not lost sight of their ideal and are continually striving to reach it, they do, however, perpetually encounter situations where they must negotiate between their ideals and the reality of everyday life.

Sam's Credo

A few more steps and Sam will reach the summit. Standing alone in the cool breeze, gazing at such a magnificent and inspiring panorama, Sam realizes without delay that the climb was well worth it. All this is a part of her and she a part of it. Quietly, Sam wonders to herself if everyone feels this intimate connection, sense of oneness, with the natural world. Drawn out of her quiet reflection, Sam catches a quick glimpse of something unnatural, and peculiar, out of the corner of her right eye. She turns her head slightly to get a better look and almost immediately regrets having done so. Staring her in the face is a gaping, barren and insulting clearcut. No, Sam realizes, not everyone does feel that connection.

Sam cannot help but wonder whether it is simply our nature, as human beings, to be so destructive. Is it indeed our destiny to destroy ourselves and the natural world around us? For if that is the path we are meant to be following then we are certainly on track. She doubts it though.

Sam recognizes that humans have been inseparable from the environment ever since their appearance on this planet, which in itself was the result of environmental processes. To begin with, the impact of primitive humans on the Earth was not of the quality or quantity which would seriously affect it. Since then, however, a growing population and its needs, along with more advanced science and technology have contributed to accelerated environmental destruction. Diminishing forests, soil erosion, urbanization, industrialization, species extinction, depletion of the ozone, global warming and an ever growing population are but some of today's most serious concerns. Sam believes that as humans, we are the first species ever to have had a global impact on the environment. The detection of pollutants and chemicals in the antarctic is but one example of this. Of course, scientists have not proven, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it is truly us who are having this massive impact, but the evidence certainly seems to point that way!

Our response to this crisis, by way of the environmental social movements of the twentieth century, has been an attempt to designate protected lands and institute several technological 'fixes' such as pollution control devices and industry standards. Sam sees that these and similar endeavors have solved, at least for the short term, certain environmental problems and temporarily saved some wilderness areas. However, although these actions have been extremely valuable, in and of themselves, Sam views them as insufficient and constitute somewhat of a bandaid approach. More than simple reform is needed. Sam feels that, to date, attempts to address environmental problems have been fairly superficial, and have not seriously challenged the underlying assumptions of the prevailing worldview. In a sense, we have merely been treating the symptoms, rather than attacking the causes, of the environmental crisis. More recycling and better waste disposal are good as far as they go, however, they also tend to lead to complacency and detract from making the necessary fundamental changes.

The dominant Western worldview, which has developed over the past several hundred years, is one based upon a human-centred perspective. Humans are apparently superior to, and independent of, the natural world. We no longer need to abide by the governing rules of that world. The Earth is seen primarily as a collection of natural resources for human consumption. In another vein, throughout history we have been fighting the idea that we may not be as important as we have made ourselves out to be; that we are not at the centre of the universe; that the sun does not revolve around us. Somewhere along the way we seem to have developed the perception that it is our duty and function to keep the world together with human glue. Sam wishes everyone could see, all at once, how dependent and inseparable we really are from our surroundings. Nothing exists in isolation.

Sam maintains that we need to lose the idea that, as humans, we are so integral and indispensable in the greater scheme of things. Before we came into being the world did fairly well without us and, if we manage to extinguish ourselves at some point, it will likely do so again. The Earth can get along fine without us, but we, on the other hand, cannot survive for one moment without it and have little clue as to how to recreate it once we have destroyed its parts. When will we collectively realize that all human and non-human life have intrinsic value? And that that inherent worth is independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human objectives? Can we even fathom the idea that we have no inherent right to diminish the richness and diversity of the Earth save to satisfy our vital needs? Staring at this clearcut, it is easy for Sam to realize that our levels of interference with the natural world have become unreasonable.

Where do the roots of the environmental problems lay? Sam posits that they originate from such areas as overpopulation, consumerism, technology and our economic model of growth. We have certainly increased ourselves at the expense of everything else. As easy as it is for the Western world to lay the blame with underdeveloped countries, Sam knows that that is not solely where it belongs. A child born in North America will drain a lot more of the world's energy and consume more of the world's resources than any child born in the Third world. Why? Simply because our desires are so great and our technology so powerful. Average North Americans could probably add several years to their lives if they were to cease smoking and drinking, eat a healthier diet, and exercise more. It is wealth and opulence which have led us into these unhealthy lifestyles. If the money spent on these surpluses could be redirected towards the needs of the Third World, we all likely would be healthier and happier.

In order to have a healthy economy we believe that we must have a growing economy and that involves more people, more consumerism, more and more. It is the philosophy which we have been brought up with: Grow, grow, bigger, better, faster; expect more. Are these higher standards of living really worth the cost? Sam longs for the day when quality rather than quantity becomes our economic system's goal, for then unbridled and exuberant growth could go on forever. When will we come to realize that success should not be measured in terms of money or materialism but rather in terms of meaningful relationships both with each other and the natural world.

Our parents' generation could afford to abuse the environment and not really notice it, especially on a continent the size of North America. It takes a long time to destroy a country as large as ours. The Earth has taken a lot of abuse, and she is finally starting to kick back. The dumps are filling up, populations are still growing, everything is still expanding. Sam recognizes that the Earth does not have an infinitely expandable carrying capacity. When a beluga whale dies in the St. Lawrence it is now buried as toxic waste. We drink the same water that those whales live in! We are now paying for our parents' negligence and our children will also. We seem to be forever trying to catch up with the ever increasing rate of environmental destruction. Many of the environmental issues of the sixties and seventies have yet to be adequately addressed and, in the meantime, more complex and sophisticated problems are incessantly arising.

Sustainable development are words which Sam hears and reads often these days. However, she is not clear of their true meaning and does not have much faith in those who advocate that environmental conservation and economic development can go hand in hand as equals. They are not equals. The welfare of the ecosystem must be the first priority if any type of economic system is to survive.

Advances in science and technology have always been our pride and joy. We are continually designing machines and technological devices to make our lives easier, simpler. As a result, we have no idea of the energy involved in getting from point A to point B, or an understanding of why storms are getting worse as the planet warms. We have removed ourselves so far from the natural world that we have little clue as to how that world actually works. Yes, in many ways technology has made our lives easier, in the short term, but we are now beginning to see that the long term is a different story.

Technology is never unbiased, thinks Sam. Technology is merely a tool that we can put to either good or bad use. Regrettably, in the Western world, science and technology have taken on the role of controlling and dominating nature; thus revealing our underlying cultural values. Sam understands that these values must change. She often wonders if people will ever realize the need for using only appropriate technology. For example, in some areas, small irrigation projects could be more useful and significantly less harmful than large dam projects.

None of this is to say that we should completely abandon our technological pursuits or that we have no place in the greater scheme of things. We are a part of this world and there is a place for us. At the moment though we seem to be more than just a little bit out of sync. For Sam, it is all a question of balance. We as individuals created the problems and we as individuals must solve them. Governments only have a four or five year mandate. Individual and corporate responsibility is the key.

Sam occasionally wonders whether the feminine attributes generally characteristic of women - those of caring, understanding and cooperation, might not be better suited for dealing with our global challenges than the more masculine competitive, win/lose, master and manage patterns of men. Sam actually sees people as somewhat of a paradox - having both the potential to jeopardize life on Earth as well as having in their power the ability to resolve the problems we face now and in the future.

Can we find the necessary balance? Perhaps it is our culture's philosophy and value system which really needs to be addressed. The environmental crisis is a cultural crisis. The world is finite and yet we are treating it as if it were not. Many decisions need to be made. Some will be tough and conceivably inhumane. Without them though, we may not evolve enough, in time, to save ourselves and other species. When the signals of the real world conflict with our societal expectations, it is time for a new pair of conceptual glasses which can provide us with fresh insight into who we are, where we are, and where we are heading. Can we recognize our mistakes and reverse them? Will each and every one of us take some personal responsibility and act upon it, as opposed to attributing the blame somewhere else? Or, will we continue to be so shortsighted and selfish as to proceed blindly down our present pathway towards self and mutual destruction?

Looking back several hundred years, we often wonder how anyone could have been so foolish as to think that the world was flat. Five hundred years from now, given the assumption that our species will still be around, Sam questions whether people will look back and say the same sorts of things about modern Western culture. How could we be so foolish as to think that we are at the centre of existence on Earth? Can we change in time for our children to benefit from the same wilderness opportunities which we have?

Sam often finds herself quite frustrated, for there is little doubt in her mind that we have enough knowledge about our environmental problems to be able to behave pro-actively towards the future. However, it appears that acting upon that knowledge seems to be quite a different matter. There are so many obstacles: vested economic interests, fear of change and so on. For Sam, there appear to be so many questions and so very few answers.

Sam feels that the answers will eventually come from a more in-depth understanding of what the environment really is, guided by greater empathy and affection for the world that surrounds us. In turn, this will lead to informed and healthy eco-action. Once our values and beliefs are in line, everything else will follow. She accepts that somewhere along the way we will have to grasp the true meaning of humility, derived from a latin word meaning 'ground', from which also originated, long ago, the word 'human'. Although occasionally falling into the trap of cynicism, Sam generally holds hope for the future of the Earth and her species. Equally, she perceives that, as a wilderness guide, she can somehow play a key role in the changes that must ensue.

It is time for Sam to head back to the real world; that world of cities, towns and technologies which we have created for ourselves. As she begins to descend the side of the mountain she looks back and glances around at her surroundings. She sees the trees shimmering in the wind, hears the squirrels chattering, the birds singing, and is awed by the seemingly endless horizon. The real world? Sam wonders.

CHAPTER V

THE INDIVIDUAL TREKS

Overview

This chapter contains a verbal description and tabular representation of the thematic analysis for each co-researcher's experience of promoting environmental awareness on wilderness travel excursions (their names have been changed in order to maintain anonymity). The verbal description is in two parts - a brief introduction to the co-researcher in the form of some pertinent background information, followed by an account of their experiences per se. Prior to participation in the study all co-researchers' value and belief frameworks were explored in-depth and found to correspond to the ecocentric way of thinking described in the previous chapter and, therefore, this aspect of their personal history will not be restated. One table accompanies each of the six descriptions (Tables 1 - 6), which encompasses an overview of each co-researcher's thematic analysis. As a note of clarification, whenever the terms 'we', 'our' or 'they' are used within the following descriptions of the co-researchers' experiences, they are referring to humankind.

Table 1 Thematic Description of Alpine's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Interaction and Processing of Experiences
- Prominence of informal vs. formal discussions
- Input of various views
- Emotional response leads to questioning of human values
- Processing of experiences
- Severe environmental destruction engenders appreciation and initiates discussion
- Unique views enhance appreciation and lead to discussion
- Leader as facilitator

Creating a Bond with the Natural World
- Sense of oneness with nature
- Unspoken connection with other people and nature
- Loss of connection with nature
- Emotional and spiritual impact

Humans' Impact on the Environment
- Absence of human impact on the environment
- Negative human impact on the environment
- Severe environmental destruction

Leader's Continual Growth
- Need for knowledgeable leaders
- Leader's self-questioning for better results
- Flexible leadership

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Wilderness Immersion Leads to Appreciation
- Unique views enhance appreciation
- Isolation induces appreciation
- Lighting and sounds heighten appreciation
- Heightened sensory awareness

Moving Beyond the Limitations of Traditional Learning
- Formal learning situations can be limiting
- Need for in-depth understanding of environmental issues
- Importance of affective component

Overall Impact of the Experience
- Positive experiences enhance environmental sensitivity
- Negative experiences are thwarting

Alpine has been involved in the outdoor field, as an independent contractor, for approximately 12 years. He has extensive experience in guiding and leading wilderness travel excursions, during all seasons of the year, throughout western Canada. He has worked with children, as well as adults, in both educational and recreational settings. Essentially, Alpine views his role in the outdoor field as being one of "getting people hooked on what's around them. The fact that they see what they're in and appreciate just how unique it is; how valuable it is. The more people that realize that, in the long run, it may affect their conscious decisions as well... We are a part of, and not apart from, the environment."

Alpine's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Interaction and Processing of the Experience

Being immersed in, and surrounded by, the natural environment; experiencing first hand the awe inspiring views of pristine wilderness areas create, for Alpine, the ideal time to raise and discuss relevant environmental issues. For example, Alpine recollects rafting up with the other canoes and floating through the steep canyons of a northern river:

> The information came out...the information about how the park could have possibly all been dammed due to a proposal to build a hydro power station...The fact that all these cliffs would have been under the river...You're in a situation where you're completely surrounded by the issue you're talking about...Those

> seem to me to be the easiest times for bringing up discussion. People seem to be keen to talk about their ideas on it.

Viewing, in direct contrast, land which has been largely destroyed and devastated by humans and seeing the potential for further destruction, also engages an emotional response on behalf of the participants. These emotions again lead to the participants being motivated and keen to share ideas and information about the environment, as well as question human values and beliefs. Alpine communicates an example of this in saying:

> As we were skiing along the ridges, large clear cuts came into view. The group sort of gathered on the ridge and were looking at the view, and the clear cut is staring us in the face. That immediately prompted discussions about, you know, "what's happening with the logging" and "gee, I hope the logging practices change so that there aren't huge vast devastated areas". And other people came up with their ideas and information that they had heard about how the logging was changing and they were supposed to be doing small cuts, and all this kind of thing.

Interacting, discussing and sharing views are critical in awakening participants to environmental concerns on Alpine's excursions. Maintaining two way communication is crucial. These experiences may become even more meaningful if they are processed, thus, providing order and meaning to the experience; making sense from what is learned. Alpine acts as a facilitator in these situations.

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

Wilderness travel often allows time for reflection, away from societal pressures and concerns, which may, in turn, help in regaining our forgotten sense of oneness with nature. Alpine suggests that, for some, the immersion allows them to develop an empathic perspective of nature; somewhat of an emotional and spiritual connection:

> It seems to happen at different times when we've been climbing a snow ascent or ski ascents up to peaks or up on a ridge line where everyone seems to just stop and look and not say anything to anyone else. There must be a real interesting bit of communication going on there with people and their surroundings. They almost ignore the rest of the group.

For a brief moment, the group seems to be harmonized not only with what surrounds them but also within - mind and emotions, thoughts and feelings. Being able to respond to the natural world in this way lends hope for a more appreciative and ecologically sensitive society.

Alpine also encourages his participants to take some time away on their own so that things which normally may be taken for granted are once again appreciated. As Alpine voices:

> It was really exciting to them, or new. Some of them had never done it before, actually had nobody around them other than the flies going by or the dragon flies hovering. And they just say that they had seen things that they hadn't noticed before. Like little birds hopping through the bush. And they would focus on these things that they'd never ever had time to see before.

Alpine firmly believes that while immersed in a wilderness environment, this reflection time allows for the questioning of human values - values which lead us to believe that we are somehow superior to all other living creatures and, thus, have the right to continue to destroy the environment in order to satisfy our wants rather than our needs. Regaining a sense of belonging and connection with nature may allow participants to understand that the values and technology which created our current environmental problems, cannot solve them; that saving what is left of the environment is greatly dependant upon personal and social change.

As powerful as these feelings of connection to the natural world may be, however, they are temporarily disrupted whenever they encounter other groups of travellers on their journey, or any other signs of human presence. It is Alpine's fear that the same reaction may occur once the participants return to their daily urban lives.

Humans' Impact on the Environment

Pristine wilderness areas should be relatively untouched and untrammelled by humans; where flora and fauna flourish without outside interference. However, our presence in, and abuse of, these areas is becoming increasingly noticeable. Alpine feels that whether the signs of human presence be as extreme as viewing a clear cut or the smoke from a lumber mill drifting across the valley, or as slight as canoeing into a gravel bar and finding discarded cans, bottles and other rubbish they both clearly communicate to the participants that our present levels of interference with the natural world have become excessive. Encountering the tremendous impact while travelling through a pristine area allows for a greater understanding, on the participants behalf, of how the Earth is degenerating due to our 'people first' attitudes; that a shift in values needs to occur in which we value the Earth more and value people differently - not necessarily less, but as only a part of the ecological whole that sustains us.

Leader's Continual Growth

In order to be effective in fostering environmental awareness on his trips, Alpine acknowledges that leaders themselves need to be flexible in their approach; capable of recognizing the opportune times and, therefore, capable of adapting to the circumstances. They may also benefit from the situation themselves as they remain open to further growth and understanding.

Alpine recognizes as well that in order for him to be as effective as possible in communicating his ecological insights and values he needs to continuously question, challenge and revamp his methods for doing so. From his personal experience he identifies the need for leaders to be knowledgeable and current on environmental issues and concerns so that, in the long run, they do not negate each others efforts.

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Wilderness Immersion Leads to Appreciation

Alpine feels that being completely immersed into a wilderness environment allows his participants to escape their daily societal pressures, concerns and distractions, thus, enabling them to appreciate elements of their natural surroundings which normally would be taken for granted. Nature becomes valued, and treasured, for its own sake. Alpine notes that this sense of respect, or reverence for the land, seems to exhibit itself most often when the participants are encountered by an inspiring and unique view. He recalls:

> We'd stop at a place where there was really a unique view, or a very...You know the top of a ridge line or beautiful setting somewhere. We tended to wait until the whole group was together again and sit back and look at the view. That's when

> people would bring out comments about how gorgeous this is. You know, hopefully it stays this way.

Hence, Alpine tries to make sure that every time he and his groups reach a unique location they take the time to just sit back and absorb it.

Being immersed in the wilderness provides the participants with an opportunity to become removed from their urban lives and its ongoing saga. These feelings of seclusion also tend to add to the experience. Alpine remembers an occasion when, "we didn't see anyone else for ten days...You lose track of the rest of the world, so to speak. That becomes a special memory. It helps create this feeling of attachment to the outdoors."

As Alpine reminisces to one of the most inspiring, and touching, moments of his career as an outdoor educator he recounts the story of an outing with a grade six class and the emotional reaction of a young girl:

> We went into a specific little spruce bog...This spruce bog was completely surrounded by poplar and birch, but there was this one area which was all just beautiful conifers and full of labrador tea and thick moss on the ground...They just laid back on the labrador tea. It was a big bed almost the moss was so soft. They just looked at it and smelt. They were surrounded by the smells of the tea and sort of the bog smells, I guess. Very different kinds of musty smells... She said it had been one of the most beautiful experiences of her life. Just that she was surrounded in an area to her that was like a fairyland or magicland. It was so unique and different. She's never ever been in a spruce bog before and it was totally different. It obviously had an impact on her if it made her cry. But it was a

crying, an emotional reason, to the little gem of a spot that we happened to be in.

Obviously much of Alpine's strategy, in terms of promoting environmental awareness on his wilderness travel trips, is simply that of stepping back and allowing the powers of nature to work their magic. In Alpine words, "nature does the reinforcing".

Moving Beyond the Limitations of Traditional Learning

Presenting information via traditional teaching methods, in which the teacher, or leader, is viewed as the sole authority, seems to inhibit discussion and interaction. Alpine feels that, "you're giving them some information. It seems to stop, in a lot of ways, it stops the group interaction. Its' like they're waiting for a lesson."

There is a time and place for everything and Alpine's experience has shown him that a classroom type setting has no place in the wilderness. Hence, an in-depth understanding of environmental issues and low impact camping techniques is necessary, but presented at a time, and in a fashion, which encourages input from all the participants. In this manner, different views and opinions can be acknowledged and participants left to make their own decisions, rather than being told what to think. Although a cognitive understanding of issues is important, for Alpine the wilderness experience is more suited towards developing the affective aspect.

Overall Impact of the Experience

The overall impact of the wilderness experience may determine how participants feel and react towards the environment in the future. An important part of Alpine's strategy is simply to assure that all participants leave with positive memories of the experience. Negative ones may only serve to perpetuate non-caring attitudes towards the environment. As Alpine concludes, "if it wasn't enjoyable, it all boils down to one simple thing: They won't enjoy it, they're turned off, and they won't care about it." Facilitating a sense of caring for the Earth is crucial to Alpine. For regardless of what physical actions and measures we take towards conservation/preservation, without parallel changes in how we think and feel about the natural world all these efforts will only prove to be temporary fixes, rays of hope, but not the new day dawning.

Table 2 Thematic Description of Scott's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Interaction and Processing of the Experience

- Questioning values and beliefs
- Emotional reactions lead to questioning of human values
- Planting questions/debates
- Discussion leads to understanding and appreciation
- Need to voice feelings

Humans' Impact on the Environment

- Severe environmental destruction
- Negative human impact on the environment
- View mistakes of others
- Nature most empowering

Leader's Continual Growth

- Evolution of leader's personal philosophy
- Personal awareness
- Need for formal training
- Lack of understanding
- Changing pre-set values
- Realistic expectations
- Sensitivity to other's values
- Leader as facilitator

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

- Sense of oneness with nature
- Lack of outside distractions
- Loss of connection with nature
- Return to refresh

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Moving Beyond the Limitations of Traditional Learning

- Living and experiencing
- Impact on all senses
- Emotional and spiritual impact
- Limitations of cognitive aspect
- Formal learning situations may be limiting
- Importance of affective component

Making the Connections

- Limited context of applicability
- Two separate realities
- Consequences of actions
- Inadequate transference
- Interconnectedness of all living things
- Human-centredness
- Return to refresh

Scott has been active in the outdoors since childhood. Professionally, he has been involved in leading both educational and recreational wilderness trips for roughly 15 years. Lately, his trips have been predominantly educational in nature and have involved a variety of seasons and modes of travel. Scott considers his primary responsibility as an outdoor leader, in terms of promoting environmental awareness, as that of being a good role model. And that being environmentally conscious is "not just the recycling box. It's okay, but its tiny. It's really really tiny. There's other issues like overpopulation and the whole philosophy or value system of our culture that have to be addressed." Scott sums up his beliefs towards promoting environmental awareness on his wilderness travel trips in saying, " Nothing can be done without safety. Nothing can be done without being environmentally conscious". For Scott environmental awareness, much like safety, is always an underlying component of everything his groups experience on the river, or in the bush.

Scott's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Interaction and Processing of the Experience

Much of Scott's environmental strategy revolves around having the participants reflect upon and discuss issues which they wouldn't normally bother to consider. At times he will try to plant pertinent questions, leaving them unanswered. For instance, Scott recalls coming upon an area which had been devastated by the effects of acid rain:

We get up on a mountain peak and why are all these trees dead? Does anyone

> know? And one person will say maybe it's this or maybe it's that and eventually they'll come up with the answer. Then, oh my God, look at that! Look at that whole valley, the trees are wiped out.

On other occasions, it is the participants' own emotional reactions (positive or negative) to a particular situation which will engender the questions within themselves:

> Just travelling through a beautiful forest and then hitting a sewer outlet... I don't think you really have to say much at that point. And I think that it is so much more valuable not to say anything and let them smell it and paddle through it. It makes them angry. Really angry. Two things happen: Anger and probably even more than that is disbelief because all of a sudden there starts to be a connection between their daily lives and wilderness or nature. We flush the toilet and where does it go? No one knows and no one cares and no one thinks about it. Obviously we have to start thinking about it.

Scott makes a point of offering people the opportunity to question and challenge their own values and beliefs, instead of merely taking them for granted. He will endeavour to have them question not only the little things, such as leaving a campsite messy, but also the larger intangible issues:

> such as overpopulation, pollution and the way in which we lead our lifestyles. I have them reflect back on how they've lived in the wilderness and contrast the values that they live in the wilderness to those of everyday life. In wilderness, for example, fancy personal possessions have little value. Money really doesn't mean very much, social status doesn't mean very much. I have them compare the value system that they've lived with in the wilderness to the value system that they have at home. I have them start thinking about things like that. Do they really need that

> fancy red car? Do they really need those clothes? Do they really need those things?

By doing this, Scott hopes to openly display the existing conflict between our inherited and largely unexamined value system on which we were brought up and a new value system which challenges much of what we have been taught.

Having the chance to openly express their different views about these, and similar, issues in some ways forces the participants to place the environment at the forefront of their conscious thinking. Voicing, discussing and debating their feelings towards the natural world is a vital component of the experience because, "I think trying to express it gives it more meaning. Even if they have trouble expressing it. They realize that the words that they know aren't even able to catch that feeling, so it must be an amazing feeling."

Humans' Impact on the Environment

Humans are the first species to ever have had a global negative impact on the Earth. Viewing first hand how we have impacted upon or destroyed the wilderness, whether it be as drastic as a clearcut or as simple as coming upon a dirty campsite, generates questions about human values and beliefs. Often the most empowering moments are those when the group is being faced by some form of severe environmental destruction, due to human interference with the natural world. The contrast allows participants actually to see and feel those levels of interference. It allows for a greater understanding of how our role upon the Earth has become one of domination and destruction; a role which we need to seriously challenge. What may have been a distant, or somewhat abstract, thought up until then, at that moment, becomes very concrete and solidified in their conscious: Human impact on the earth is excessive.

Despite our apparently oppressive role, Scott still considers nature as having the upper hand and on many occasions he will simply step back and allow the powers of nature to take over. For in Scott's mind:

> Nature is by far the biggest and the best teacher than anything or anyone can ever be...Something like the northern lights is probably one of the most meaningful moments of a trip. You can't plan them, they just come up but they are opportunities that you have to be aware of as a leader and take advantage of.

Leader's Continual Growth

Everyone comes into the wilderness experience with varying viewpoints and levels of understanding about environmental issues. One of the most important things that Scott has learned over the years is that in order to reach as many participants as possible with his environmental message he needs to be very adaptable as a leader. Frustration is, in one word, what Scott recurrently feels on many of his trips. The participant's often lack empathy towards the natural world and their pre-set, taken for granted, values on the subject are what seem to create the greatest challenge for him. Scott voices this frustration in saying:

> Many really don't understand what's wrong with dropping a gum wrapper on the ground. They don't understand what's wrong with cutting down a dead tree for fire wood. Its dead, its of no value, we might as well cut it down. Or even a live one for that matter cause there are so many trees there...A lot of the things that they've seen or heard or read about are really old nineteen fifties philosophies. So that's the way they go into wilderness, ready and willing to abuse it. Not purposely

> but just in their sort of innocent ignorance, I guess.

In order to deal effectively with this sense of futility Scott realizes that he needs to have realistic expectations of his participants and that he needs to be sensitive to their incoming values. Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither will an ecologically sensitive society. In saying that, however, Scott is still resolute in his conviction that great strides can be made towards becoming environmentally enlightened on his wilderness travel trips:

> They think nature's pretty but it's more of a backdrop... They live their urban lives and honestly believe they can drive out of the city and experience nature from a car. But this type of experience is obviously not even remotely close to actually living in wilderness. But people don't understand this until they experience the difference. From a vehicle they see nature as a view and believe that there are lots of those views. So if that view gets cut down its no problem because there's always another one. But when they can experience a beautiful moment in wilderness by actually living it, it just seems to sink right into their soul. It becomes personally meaningful and intrinsically valuable.

Over the years Scott has witnessed a tremendous amount of growth and development in his own personal philosophy towards the environment, which has in turn affected the ways in which he promotes environmental awareness with his groups. Scott's philosophy has evolved in such a manner that he has become much more sensitive to the "less obvious" aspects of the experience. In his words:

> When I started out I was more concerned about the objective aspects of the environment such as not shampooing in the lake; not dumping our noodles into the lake or the woods; not throwing bread in the woods for animals and not

> feeding the wildlife. Just very, very simple things that you read about in a book. Over the last years I've become more and more sensitive to taking them from a pristine to a non-pristine natural situation; to doing solos; to doing sharing circles and debriefings and trying to make it a more holistic experience and to have them think about the environmental aspect from beginning to end.

Although admitting to the need for some formal training in the field, his personal growth and sense of appreciation are the fundamental ingredients of the way in which he presently goes about fostering environmental awareness. As Scott relates:

> Ten or twenty years ago I probably wouldn't have spent as much time watching the moon come out or the sun go down, or watching the birds in the trees. But now that's really important to me. So I guess its through age and having things become more meaningful and valuable to me personally that I become more aware of the subtle aspects of the experience. Consequently, I've changed the way I try to get the message across to others.

Just as it is vital for his participants to live and experience the wilderness, Scott feels very strongly towards the leader's need to continually do so on their own as well. In order to prevent any sense of staleness from setting in, and to expand his own horizons of environmental understanding, Scott believes that:

> It's really important to get yourself out and experience as much as possible. You read about environmental causes in the newspaper such as dams or clear cuts and if you've been there, or lived something similar, you'll be a lot more caring about it because you've experienced it. It will be meaningful to you. It's important for leaders to get out and experience a diversity of ecosystems.

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

Another feature of the experience which Scott tries to stress is that of allowing participants the necessary time to develop a sense of oneness with nature. He does so by encouraging them to take time in the wilderness on their own, away from all other distractions. In doing so he hopes that they will form an intimate bond with the natural world that surrounds them. Scott maintains that it is important:

> Just to get some time away from the group and to sit back and reflect on things. A lot of them become more aware of the environment at that time. A trip is such a social experience for them...But because it's so social it also takes away from the more natural side of it. To have them go off on their own where they can lie down and watch the trees blowing in the wind; watch the clouds go by; listen to the grass and the trees or the birds or whatever. That helps them, definitely helps them, to become more aware and more connected to the natural world.

Scott perceives, however, that once his participants return to their daily lives this sense of appreciation may very well not endure the test of time. That, "as time passes if they don't go back into the wilderness that feeling dissipates extremely quickly and they're back to square one". Thus, these feelings of oneness with the natural world, be they spiritual, physical, emotional, or mental, need to be rejuvenated on a regular basis by returning to similar wilderness excursions.

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Moving Beyond the Limitations of Traditional Learning

Scott firmly believes that environmental awareness should be taught in a holistic manner. All dimensions of our being need to be affected in order for the environmental message to really become meaningful. In Scott's words:

> One of the greatest things is to show them, or demonstrate to them, the powers of wilderness in terms of how great it can be spiritually, socially, emotionally and cognitively. It's critical that they come out of the experience valuing it and wanting to protect it.

The more dimensions and senses Scott can tap into, the more profound an effect he feels his message will have in the long run. Whereas, traditionally, our educational system has tended to focus primarily, if not exclusively, on the cognitive dimension, Scott views our cognitive understanding of environmental issues as merely being a piece of the puzzle, albeit an important one. In his opinion, leaders often place too great of an emphasis on it. As he states, "People get too much of that. We talk about this and we talk about that. It goes in one ear and out the other...Teaching in the wilderness is not teaching in the classroom." Scott clearly beholds the wilderness and the classroom as two very different and distinct teaching environments. Where one is undoubtedly focused on imparting cognitive knowledge, the other is experiential:

> In a classroom I try to give them knowledge and sort of hammer home why its important. Once you get them outside its not as much imparting knowledge on them but having them live through it. Having them experience why its important. When I'm outside I try to limit the amount of verbal diarrhea I give them in terms of imparting knowledge. I have them try to live and experience things.

Although Scott considers both elements as being important, and complementary to one another, in terms of putting forth an environmental message, he posits that living and experiencing the wilderness has a much more profound and powerful impact on people; that "that's what's so wonderful about nature or wilderness, that it does teach to those aspects that people aren't used to." Touching upon those 'non-traditional' domains is essential if he is to instill a true understanding of, and continued interest in, today's environmental concerns. Scott demonstrates this feeling in saying:

> I'm interested now in reading about things in books and in newspapers or trying to understand things, but it's only because I love the outdoors, I love that environment, I love those animals, that I want to learn more about them. So those underlying spiritual and emotional feelings, if they can be developed first the cognitive stuff will come really easily.

We genuinely value things when we feel their importance deeply and when we profoundly understand why they are important. A bona fide ethic for the earth will surface once we believe in our hearts and minds that our environment is of greater importance than we are.

Making the Connections

One of the key problems which Scott senses with his efforts to promote environmental awareness is that despite what his participants may learn on the trip, in some ways it seems to have somewhat of a limited context of applicability. That is to say that:

> They see it in a narrow focus and they want to protect that particular area of wilderness... But they don't see the wilderness area and its preservation connected to their daily lives. So they get back and nothing changes in their daily lives. However, the next time they go out on a trip they may be more careful about how they do things and they might value it more, but only in that context.

Although learning to tread lightly in the wilderness is significant, understanding how our daily urban practices are impacting upon that same wilderness is also of pivotal importance. Scott is often dismayed at how people are unable, or unwilling, to connect these two realities: Their wilderness reality and their everyday life reality; that they are usually oblivious to how they interact with one another. Scott sees a definite need to somehow bridge the gap between the two realities but for him "that's really difficult to do. I think it's something that I'm continually changing, adapting and learning as I go along."

In attempting to make the necessary connections, Scott feels that first and foremost it is crucial to "keep reminding them of the two worlds and keep having them question what we, meaning society, are doing and what we should be doing." In doing so he hopes that the participants will develop a greater understanding of how interconnected we are to the natural world and that whatever we impose on it, we are ultimately imposing upon ourselves.

In order to best convey this point, Scott strives to make his environmental message as relevant and human-centred as possible since:

> The bottom line is people care the most about themselves and if you can try to connect it to people selfishly then it may have more meaning to them, rather than just being some pretty natural backdrop of a forest that looks nice.

Nevertheless, Scott would be the first to admit that he is sceptical about the success of his efforts in this realm and is cognizant of his need to further explore other tactics that may help in establishing a link between the two worlds.

Trying to discover, and relay, a way in which our wilderness experience can underly our everyday life is indeed a formidable task. In aspiring to do so with his own lifestyle, Scott acknowledges that even he tends to "slide back in, almost unknowingly, into the everyday humdrum urban lifestyle." Being able to effectively, and continually, transfer the value framework which evolves from a wilderness experience to our daily lives is a challenge that lies ahead for him. At the moment, he concludes that "probably the very best way is to regularly go back to wilderness and open ourselves to allow her wonders and beauty to guide us, empower us, and fill us with hope and awe."

Table 3 Thematic Representation of Joey's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Creating a Bond with the Natural World
- Sense of oneness
- The Earth as a living organism
- Co-constitutionality
- Changing duality perspective
- Emotional and spiritual impact
- Importance of affective component
- Establishing natural rhythms

Leader's Continual Growth
- Significance of leader's belief framework
- Limitations to the pursuitist attitude
- Leader as a facilitator

The Unique Potential of Wilderness Experiences

Overall Impact of the Experience
- Sense of enjoyment
- Positive experiences enhance environmental sensitivity
- Sensitivity to other's values
- Fulfilling expectations

Making the Connections
- Connecting to something larger

Joey has been leading wilderness river trips for the past eight years and winter ski trips for five. He has travelled with participants of differing ages, ranging from teenagers through to seniors. He is involved in both educational and recreational excursions every year. On his wilderness travel trips, Joey aims to instill in his participants the idea that their mode of travel is a means to an end and not merely an end in itself; that:

> Canoeing as an end in itself is just a recreational activity. Whitewater canoeing, that's great. But in our programs it's only a means to an end and the end is taking them down the river and then trying to promote environmental awareness while we're doing it...The underlying philosophy of it all is that we're a part of this environment. We're not separated from it.

Joey's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

Joey's promotion of environmental awareness has two focuses. The first, that of demonstrating to his participants how to impact lightly upon the land, is a given. As Joey explains:

> That's just part and parcel of it...Doing things like explaining to them ecologically sound ways of selecting their campsite and cooking their meals and harvesting natural resources like getting some berries or firewood...When you're going on a wilderness trip you talk about low impact camping and making sure that we treat the environment with respect.

The second, more consequential, aspect for Joey is that of conveying his belief that we are not separate, or independent, from the environment, we are of it. Joey's outlook is one in which he views the Earth as a living organism of which we are part - we are not the owners nor merely the tenants. On his trips, Joey continually tries "to emphasize the idea of being at one with the river. Understanding that the river itself is flowing, moving and you could almost see it as a living organism." Joey recollects one of many suitable instances for putting forth this feeling:

> One of the wonderful times is when you're cutting across slopes and being aware of the avalanche danger. That's a very real living part of that mountain. There's this dynamic moving part of mountains that are very exciting...They start to understand that it's not just me trying on some warm clothes and then skiing across this environment. As soon as I come into that environment, I become a part of it. The environment is there because of my perception of it. And my perception of it also makes the environment real.

This concept of co-constitution, an indissoluble interrelationship of the individual and his or her world, is in direct contrast to the traditional dualistic attitude with which most of Joey's participants embark upon the trips. That is, the attitude that people and their environment are, in effect, two different and distinct entities. Joey finds himself continually searching for circumstances which may allow his participants to overcome this subject/object separation, thereby creating a sense of oneness with the natural world. One ideal situation is:

> When a person is swimming...When they're going through the water, it can be "this water is cold and get me the hell out of here. I hate it." Or, you can really play it up and say "right on, that is just a superb experience of feeling the current

> and feeling the canoe being pulled away from your hands as you're sitting in the water." And that's a real exciting time. And it's an exciting time because yes, the waves got the better part of me but all of a sudden I'm no longer - see that removes the subject/object, now you're in that water.

Joey reminisces back to two separate trips which he guided down a northern river, and how participants on each trip reacted entirely differently to the same situation. The scene revolved around hiking up to a viewpoint overlooking the river. The participants involved were a 75 year old gentleman, named Albert, on one trip, and a group of young lawyers on the other. In thinking about Albert, Joey remembers:

> That was a very important experience for him on top of pulpit rock and that was a point where, for him, there was a oneness. There was a real experience there of having accomplished something. To him it was climbing a mountain, although it was more of a foothill, but that was a real personal experience for Albert. For these lawyers, it was get me up there, take the picture, get me down and let's go onto the next highlight on this trip. It was not a personal experience. There wasn't a connection.

For Albert, reaching the top of the mountain touched him very deeply in an emotional and spiritual way. He and the mountain became as one. Whereas for the group of lawyers the experience remained purely physical in nature. They were merely conquering one feat and then moving on to the next. Evidently they had not yet managed to shed themselves of their objectified, removed attitudes towards the environment. It was them against the mountain.

Helping participants to be free of this perspective is by no means a simple task as it has essentially been engrained into us since day one. As Joey observes:

> We teach kids right from about grade three, or grade two, or even grade one to - actually now that I think about it we probably teach it right from kindergarten - but we teach them to think in a purely objective manner. We teach them to separate themselves from their environment. And we do it by teaching subjects. And they walk from one classroom to another and never have a chance to integrate things and find out how they work with their lives.

Joey wonders whether a couple weeks in the wilderness can really contribute to altering, to any significant degree, beliefs which are continually reinforced in our daily urban lives; but one way or another, he knows that the change has to happen.

Allowing participants to gradually adapt to somewhat of a more natural rhythm, as opposed to the rush imposed upon them in their everyday lives, is also an important part of learning to be at one with the environment. Joey describes:

> People come off the bus, or off the plane, and they come from their very objectified environment and there's very much a pressure, I think, a sense of go go go. We have to do this. We have to accomplish it in a certain amount of time because this is the way that we run our lives. And then things finally start to slow down a bit and they find out that, you know, there is more to this experience than simply going out there and playing the waves.

Leader's Continual Growth

Joey firmly believes that much of the potential success of communicating a long lasting environmental message through wilderness travel trips hinges strongly upon the leader's personal values and beliefs towards the environment. If the leader himself/herself is one who maintains a dualistic perspective of the world, or is primarily pursuit oriented, they will most likely limit their focus to promoting the concrete and objective low impact camping techniques. Which, in Joey's opinion, is missing half the picture:

> When you're pursuit oriented I think you miss 50%. There's two parts to our being...There's that physical, objectified, removed part and that's the part that can do the rock climbing, that can do the physical part. But there's also the being part, where you have feelings and understandings and cognitions and emotions. And we tend to overemphasize the physical pursuits orientation. We tend to under emphasize the emotional part; the internal variables.

Joey in fact views his role, in terms of fostering environmental awareness, as being that of a facilitator, or even a resource, rather than that of an instructor, per se. He is:

> here first of all to organize the resources. The canoes are part of the resource, and where we camp is part of the resource, and the food is part of the resource. So those are organized, but we're also resources ourselves...Take away the threatening aspects of the environment so that they feel open to explore their own inclinations and discoveries.

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Making the Connections

Joey feels strongly that being immersed in a wilderness environment enables participants to connect to something much larger than their physical self. Paddling through awe inspiring canyons can help one develop a sense of humility and encourage the understanding of how insignificant humanity truly is in the greater scheme of things; how we are merely a part of a much greater whole.

Overall Impact of the Experience

Joey recognizes that simply making sure that all the participants thoroughly enjoy themselves is fundamental to a successful trip. Clearly, "it's really important, when doing telemark turns, to really enjoy it; to love it; to feel the powder under their feet and to laugh and have a good time. I mean, it has to be exciting." These positive memories can only contribute to, and encourage, a sense of empathy towards the environment.

Understanding the participants' individual expectations via the wilderness trip, and being sensitive to those objectives is also of consequence. Often, the participant's objectives are not congruent with his own, in which case Joey realizes that, first and foremost, their needs are to be met. Afterall, he is there because of the participants and not the other way around. It is, therefore, critical to clarify their expectations from the outset, and to find out:

> whether or not they're interested in an experience which will include ecosystemic thinking, or whether they're interested in running the biggest waves and climbing the biggest mountains and having the best meals and then drinking scotch at night.

If Joey perceives that the latter is the case, regrettably, conveying the more abstract and affective aspect of his environmental message may not be worth the time and effort involved. Consequently, at the very least:

> They're making sure that they're doing things on the river that are environmentally sound. So they're making sure that we're packing out all of our garbage. Very

> very concrete, very structured things that they can do to have very low impact. So that they feel that once they've gone down this river they've had the experience of being environmentally sound. But there's a huge difference between doing that and having actually experienced the living river.

In summarizing his thoughts regarding fostering environmental awareness on wilderness travel excursions, Joey astutely alleges that "you don't have to preach the message as much as get rid of the message." Resistance to respecting the intrinsic worth of the natural world is deeply imbedded in our culture, blinding us to the fact that the world was not created for people only but for purposes which transcend us and our limited foresight.

Table 4 Thematic Description of Robin's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Leader's Continual Growth
- Personal awareness
- Significance of leaders' belief framework
- Self-questioning for better results
- Dynamic learning process
- Evolution of leader's personal philosophy

Interaction and Processing of Experiences
- Discussion leads to understanding and appreciation
- Women's role

Creating a Bond with the Natural World
- Sense of appreciation
- Emotional and spiritual impact
- Value shift

Humans' Impact on the Environment
- Negative human impact on the environment
- Questioning values and beliefs
- Sense of hope in and for humanity

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Overall Impact of the Experience
- Positive experiences enhance environmental sensitivity
- Fulfilling expectations

Making the Connections
- Consequences of actions
- Interconnectedness of all living things

Robin is a young woman who has been involved as a wilderness river guide for the past six summers. She is inactive as a guide during the winter months. Although her interest in the outdoors has been a lifelong one, she still considers herself a beginner in terms of promoting environmental awareness on her trips. The continual re-evaluation of her beliefs and values has left her somewhat unsettled as she wrestles with humanity's relationship to itself as well as to the natural world. Her thoughts and lifestyle at present, however, certainly reflect and ecocentric orientation and will likely become even more so in the future.

Robin's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Leader's Continual Growth

Robin is quick to recognize and relate the importance of the outdoor leader's personal values and beliefs when trying to foster a sense of caring for the Earth. She feels quite strongly that in order for any type of enduring environmental message to be passed on that the leaders themselves must be sending it for intrinsic reasons. As she reflects upon this issue she immediately envisions and speaks of two very different co-workers:

> If he wasn't forced to do this stuff he wouldn't. If it wasn't trendy, or something he should be doing as an eco-tourist, he wouldn't be doing it. It's not coming from inside, it's an external thing...It's not in his values and beliefs. _____ talks a good line but his concentration is not on the environment. He talks it but it's not him. He can not sustain a conversation about it. But if you go on a trip with _____

> and you discuss things he'll do it very slowly...He's a really good reader in terms of finding out where they're at in terms of how much he thinks they're willing to listen to. For some people it will be a two minute conversation. He'll understand where they're at and can give them some really fabulous insight. That's because he has a really well thought out philosophy on his actions and thoughts. His own personal philosophy is quite developed. It's all coming from inside. It's really a part of him.

To be most effective, Robin believes that the message has to be one that is deeply felt. One that comes from the heart and is not merely 'a part of the job'.

As an outdoor leader Robin views her position as one of being a role model and mediator. Being a role model not only encompasses demonstrating what she believes to be the most appropriate ways of treading lightly on the land but also, and of greater significance, is communicating her love and respect for the wilderness. As Robin comments, "I think my enthusiasm speaks for my appreciation...like when I get to the top of the mountain or I'm paddling I just get really exhilarated by it and that shows". Often the participants don't need to hear the message if they can see it.

Robin has witnessed her wilderness philosophy evolve over the years and hopes it will continue to do so as she learns more about, and from, herself, her companions and the Earth as a whole. In comparing her initial efforts of promoting environmental awareness to her present day ones she remarks:

> I don't think I was originally really doing much environmental education per se, because I didn't have much myself. So I was doing very explicit things like pooping and peeing and cleaning up the campsite; leave nothing but footprints kinds of stuff...I think I've really changed and grown over the years.

Robin, although feeling very privileged to be one of those involved in taking people out into this realm is also the first to humbly admit that she does not have all the answers and perhaps she never will. In her words, "I barely feel like I've started in terms of my environmental understanding. I know I go out there and probably still do things that in ten years I'll disdain. I learn as I go". As much as she is cognizant of the fact that she knows now more than she has known in the past, Robin also recognizes that a consequential part of that new knowledge is the understanding of how little she, and the rest of humanity, truly do know. The evolution and future course of the Earth are far from fully understood.

Interaction and Processing of Experiences

A prominent part of promoting environmental awareness, for Robin, is allowing for, and encouraging, an interactive process to occur. Discussing our thoughts and emotions can add power to an experience which otherwise may fade away. She does not view herself as complying to the traditional teacher-student roles. Nor is it her function to pass judgement. As Robin expresses:

> I don't think of them as the ignorant mass and me the educated one at all. I feel like we're all muddling through life together and helping each other with lessons...I go away from every trip with something new that someone else has given me. We all learn something.

Hence, if she herself is not open to learning, she cannot expect the participants to be. For Robin, learning and teaching are not one way streets. Learners often teach more than they learn.

Robin is presently grappling with the idea that perhaps women, or people who demonstrate characteristics generally representative of women, may be more successful in promoting the necessary interaction and discussion processes which she feels need to ensue in order to effectively transfer the environmental message. She has on occasion been faulted by male co-workers for not being decisive enough with her beliefs or of being too questioning. Robin feels, however, that:

> It's not that I, or other women, are insecure in their knowledge. It's that they're respecting the other individual's opinion. They're allowing it. That's one thing, I think, women can contribute in the wilderness sphere is a different way of interacting with each other, which will allow, in environmental frameworks, will allow knowledge to be something that's contested instead of authoritative.

Perhaps the features such as caring, understanding and cooperation may, in the long run, be better suited towards solving global environmental challenges than those of competition, win/lose, master and manage.

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

There is something intangible in her efforts to promote a sense of oneness with the natural world that Robin has difficulty expressing verbally. She is confident, however, that on a wilderness trip her actions, enthusiasm, and obvious sense of appreciation portray these feelings to others; that her values and beliefs are conveyed implicitly. The sense of emotional connection and spiritual relationship which she seeks are not things which she feels she can force upon the participants. In her words, "I don't think I always have much to say about it. Sometimes it's just something you feel". Feelings cannot be thrust upon others and often cannot be imparted through words alone. The most powerful experiences unite both information and emotion.

For Robin, an extended wilderness trip is an ideal medium through which to permit these feelings to transpire. Allowing for that to happen is crucial. As she voices:

> It's not all practice...There's something else. There's something underneath that that's a bit more fundamental, that's hard to get at. Some sort of a value change, I suppose. A value shift. A better understanding of their impact on the world. How they interact with other species. How they're interacting with each other. On a two week wilderness trip people have time to think about that.

Perhaps it is this creative readjustment in values that we need in order to find it within ourselves to harmonize with the processes of the Earth.

Human Impact on the Environment

Robin has learned to exploit moments where human impact on the environment has been made apparent. She will go out of her way to erase, or eliminate as much as possible, any signs of human presence. She recalls one experience where:

> We found a whole bunch of barrels, plastic orange barrels... And so we spent two days cleaning them up. We paddled looking for them. We paddled way slower than we would have been paddling otherwise. And they were everywhere. We had three canoes full of orange containers. Absolutely full. We found out where it was coming from. We got them together and we drove them into the Alberta Minister of Environment's office and wrote letters and that sort of stuff.

Regardless of how insignificant the impact may be, Robin will expressly go out of her way to eradicate it. She will make a point of turning around and paddling upstream in order to pick up some human remnant which one of her participants has spotted. In doing so she realizes that the participants are not only questioning her actions and sense of commitment but, more importantly, they are also questioning their own.

As much as Robin attempts to get participants to evidence and think about how wasteful and destructive humans have become in our ways of living, how we've unnecessarily impacted upon forest, waterways, other species' habitats, she equally tries to put forth a hopeful message; that people are in fact our most valuable resource. For it is these very same people who can solve the environmental problems we face now and in the future.

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Overall Impact of the Experience

An overall sense of enjoyment is critical if any long lasting environmental message is to endure. As Robin has witnessed, "at the end of some trips people have told me that this has been the high point of their life and so undoubtedly they are learning something from that".

She is aware of the fact, however, that people embark on these types of trips for various reasons and that learning to be environmentally conscious is not always part of the participant's expectations. Therefore, having an idea of what each participants' goals and objectives with regard to the wilderness trip is essential. Often they are:

> [there] for a good time. They don't want my knowledge enforced on them. There's not necessarily any need or desire for it. Then again a lot of them do come out quite keen, especially with the popular nature of environmental activities. They show it awfully quickly.

Robin feels that unless their initial expectations of the trip are met, it will be highly unlikely that any other type message will leave a lasting impression.

Making the Connections

Once immersed in a wilderness environment, Robin believes that people are placed closer to vital connections; connections to themselves, others, and to the Earth. Connections which in a city may be very abstract become quite tangible and apparent in a wilderness situation. As Robin relates:

> I started realizing, understanding more how I connected with things after I left the urban environment. Because you know its funny but I never made a connection between the North Saskatchewan and my toilet or my shower. That connection was just so far off. They become much more real once you go out there and are directly tied to it. Life there is very concrete in terms of things aren't removed from you. You're connected to your daily subsistence. Whereas things are very diffuse and removed in the cities in terms of we don't see the reactions of our interactions with the world. You don't see the ozone layer diminishing daily. All of those things are very diffuse. But you do see your soap floating down the river. You do see campfire scars coming back time and time again. So those things start to make more sense.

Our technological achievements have in many ways distanced us, and in fact removed humankind, from the natural world. Wilderness experiences, however, allow us to interact and regain a sense of connection with nature in ways which may once again grant us an understanding of how powerfully the Earth influences our daily actions and how in turn we are influencing her. In the end, we may have to learn that true independence is in reality a form of dependence or interdependence.

Table 5 Thematic Description of June's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

- **Creating a Bond with the Natural World**
  - Sense of oneness
  - Establishing natural rhythms
  - Quiet time for reflection
  - Emotional and spiritual impact
- **Interaction and Processing of Experiences**
  - Discussion leads to understanding and appreciation
  - Input of various views
  - Planting questions
  - Processing of experiences
- **Leader's Continual Growth**
  - Significance of leader's belief framework
  - In-depth understanding
- **Humans' Impact on the Environment**
  - Absence of impact
  - Negative impact
  - Sense of hope in and for humanity

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

- **Wilderness Immersion Leads to Appreciation**
  - Necessity of the wilderness environment
- **Overall Impact of the Experience**
  - Sense of enjoyment
- **Making the Connections**
  - Interconnectedness of all living things
  - Relationships
  - Changing pre-set values
  - Sense of insignificance
  - Connecting with something larger
  - Two separate realities
  - Return to refresh

June is an experienced outdoor leader who has been guiding both recreational and educational wilderness trips for the past ten years. In 1989 she initiated her own outdoor business which primarily involves short term outings, with both school groups and adults. Promoting environmental awareness, for June, is not simply a matter of teaching minimal impact camping techniques. Her concern, rather, is with conveying an understanding of our need for interdependence with each other as well as with the rest of the natural world within which we dwell. As June herself said:

> We are just a part of the natural world. Just like a tree or a rock or anything else...We should be very much a part of the ecosystem...but I think we have become more like a parasite. The way we live today is totally separate from the ecosystem we were meant to live in...For me, the underlying message is relationships: Relationships with the world and relationships with each other. We have to feel a part of the world. Until we realize our need for interdependence it will be difficult to have meaningful relationships with the mother Earth or with each other.

Hence, June believes that we need to learn to live within the ecosystem in such a manner that harmonious co-existence is more consequential than individual subsistence.

June's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

A necessary part of a wilderness trip, for June, is that time in which participants are encouraged to develop a sense of connection with the natural world. Allowing participants the opportunity to establish and live by their natural rhythms, on a wilderness excursion, is vital. June believes that the slowed down pace of a trip enables participants to think more of themselves and their relationship with the world. As June conveys:

> You watch people, they get there and you can tell they're still in work mode. Their heads are just going full tilt. What's this? What's that? How do we do this? How do we do that? They're so question oriented and everything has to be boom boom boom. You see them go from being very hyper - what time are we going to leave? What time should I get up? What time's breakfast? Should I pack my things now? Questions questions questions for the first four days. And most of them time oriented. But as they start to settle into river mode then that becomes less important. They get up when they get up.

Establishing natural rhythms is helpful in feeling united with the Earth. We realize that we are no longer run by the rules of society. We're not in the rat race. We can just listen and get in touch with our bodies; with ourselves.

Quiet times on our own where we can reflect on life as a whole are another important aspect of June's trips. For example:

> On trips when you get to a spot that is just totally awesome, you feel so small, I think there that there's a time where just silence is needed. The silence is them feeling very much a part of the whole world without having to say anything.

Not everyone though is comfortable with silence and, therefore, June attempts, in some situations, to separate groups. A good illustration would be on a hike:

> It seems like there's almost a silent awareness of who to connect to. People who like silence will follow one of us through a place where it can just be silent.

> And the other one of us will take the talkers somewhere else.

The potential for some sort of emotional and spiritual impact to transpire is much greater on a wilderness trip than in the city. In this case, the world spiritual does not necessarily mean religious although it may include it. Rather, it reveals a growing perception that we are part of a greater whole, which is a source of wonder and humility. As June voices:

> I don't believe that you can run a class in the city and expect to have it translated as if you get people out there experiencing it; feeling it...In the city you can get across the cognitive awareness but you can't get the qualitative awareness to happen.

We think only with our brains and not with our souls and so we fail to recognize the delicate web of life of which we are a part. By removing ourselves from society and getting back to the bush, however temporary, we can learn to live and cooperate with the mother Earth. We can live a part of the world as we were supposed to be by getting back in tune and setting aside our self-centredness and consumptive tendencies.

Interaction and Processing of Experiences

Allowing participants to express and discuss various views of the world is also an integral part of the process. For June, it is often around the campfire where discussions of the world and our relationships to each other and the Earth, will arise. The outcome of such exchanges will vary with each individual, but as June put it:

> Whether people understand it or not, they go away thinking about it; thinking about their individual lives at home and how much of a rat race they're in. How much it's an individual oriented society and how much we totally forget, once we

> get back into our rat race, that anything exists beyond our own little life.

Hence, the participants begin to question a way of life which, until then, had simply been taken for granted.

This self-questioning stems not only from dialogue with others but also from quiet time personal reflections. Consequently, "I think it's important to debrief these silent times, but not in a formal way...That, in many ways, almost solidifies it to talk about it afterwards and learn from them about their experiences". Reflection allows the participants to reassess parts of an experience which may otherwise have gone unnoticed.

Leader's Continual Growth

There is no doubt, in June's opinion, that the message she, and other outdoor leaders, are attempting to convey must be one which originates from the heart. Otherwise:

> I don't think you can give it your all...You can't put as much energy into it if it's not a part of your belief structure. We do get an awful lot of questions relating to why we do this and why we do that and it's comforting for me to be able to explain it from the heart and not just from a book...I don't think it could possibly have as much of an impact if it wasn't coming from the heart.

As an outdoor leader, June feels that having an in-depth understanding of the environment, and our relationship as part of the ecosystem, is pivotal. June believes that many outdoor leaders, although having good intentions, often betray their superficial understandings of the issues. She illustrates this when thinking of a friend whom to her is likely the most environmentally conscious person she knows. However, his methods of consumption are not always well accepted, and little understood, by today's modern high tech campers:

> Some people see him as high impact but he's not because he knows how to live in the bush. When he is consumptive he's consuming things that - he's just very much a part of the system. He will cut trees down but they are trees that naturally need to be cleared or would die anyway and it's a matter of him living within the world the way the world was designed for him to live in. He's consumptive the way that we should be. He's far less consumptive than these high tech low impact campers who go out there with every piece of new and fancy equipment. They get the best tents, the best stoves. You know, all the equipment that will allow them to live out there without touching anything. But they don't stop to think about it. Where do they think all this equipment is coming from? And where's it going to go when they're done with it? It will have to be disposed of somewhere. That type of impact is much worse and doesn't happen with _____. He lives it. He believes it. He feels it. He's a part of it. His philosophy is so much one of we are a part of this world and we have to live a part of this world. And he tries to promote how we can live comfortably as part of this world. He will be one of the ones that survives regardless. If the world were to end in terms of our society, he would be very much alive and very successful.

June hopes that someday we may all manage to find it within ourselves to live as appropriately and harmoniously with the Earth, and with each other, as her friend does. We need to develop a sense of continual awareness as to why we are acting as we are, and what the consequences of actions will be upon the rest of the world.

Humans' Impact on the Environment

Our society's present relationship with the Earth is one of domination, destruction and control. June posits that this attitude is negated somewhat when taking part on a wilderness trip in a area which shows very few, if any, obvious signs of human influence. She recalls a trip this summer where a participant was quite astounded by the absence of human impact. "He was so elated that he could go on an entire wilderness trip and only find one piece of garbage". It is much easier on these occasions to foster feelings of peace and harmony with our surroundings . On the other hand, travelling through the very same area at the end of the season with another group, June recalls how disheartening it was, for both she and the participants, to be continually coming across fire scars, unnecessary trails, and other signs of human presence. Our relationship to the natural world, in those instances, is obviously one of intrusion and devastation.

June still holds hope though, and sees great potential in the wilderness experience. In June's words:

> I think that maybe we're on the edge. Maybe people like yourselves and ourselves can start to really promote radical changes. I think if enough people gain experiences that are intrinsically rewarding, truly intrinsically rewarding, in terms of relationships both with the Earth and with each other, that maybe there can start to be a change. In today's society there's just a total lack of experience and awareness that some other life is possible.

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Wilderness Immersion Leads to Appreciation

June believes quite strongly that true feelings of appreciation cannot arise out of a city environment and, thus, wilderness experiences are essential. In a city, people are too far removed from the natural world to even begin to fathom how we are connected to it. While pondering this thought June said:

> Here [in the city] you could talk about it but it wouldn't have the same meaning. The feeling wouldn't be the same. It's hard to describe. I think because right now where we're sitting there's this myth that we're in control of our whole lives. You know, we are in control of the world right now. But when you're out there [in the bush] there's that realization that we are only a tiny part of it. The mother Earth controls us more that we control her.

Thus, the complete immersion into the wild environment which has become so far removed from our daily lives can help to re-awaken feelings of humility and, therefore, appreciation.

Overall Impact of the Experience

June is the first to admit that in order for a trip to have any type of long lasting effect on the participants it has to be fun. Without a sense of enjoyment and excitement memories of the trip, and anything learnt, will simply fade away once the participants return to the frantic pace of their rat race lives. One of the main goals, on June's trips, is to create an experience which will give them the desire to return to the wilderness and expand their understandings of it. And since "they're coming from a very high excitement society the way you're going to clinch them is primarily through high excitement". Nevertheless, there is not enough excitement for that to be the only thing which inspires participants to return to similar experiences.

Making the Connections

June repeatedly emphasizes that a wilderness trip is an ideal time to highlight the importance of understanding our interdependence with each other and with the rest of the Earth. However, it is a very difficult message for June to convey. As much as she wholeheartedly believes in it, she realizes that she is up against the underpinnings of society itself. As she voices:

> I think today the world is so egocentric, so individual oriented. Everything from the time we're in kindergarten, to whenever, is based on a me society. Do the best for me, self-esteem, self motivation, blah blah blah. Which is good but it's gone to the point where relationships are not recognized anymore...There's no connectedness between people or the Mother Earth because we're constantly told that we don't need it.

These pre-set values which, more often than not, participants display create strong feelings in frustration for June. Our in-bred ideas of individualism firmly oppose the ways of nature, for:

> if we were living the way we were supposed to be, in an ecosystemic way, you do have to rely on other people. You have to rely on other people and you have to rely on what Mother Earth gives us.

As humans we have grown to believe that 'it's everyone for him/herself'; that individual survival is of utmost priority. If we continue to travel along this path, that is believing that both nature and people are to be dominated, we will likely guarantee some sort of collective disaster. These survival instincts are truly hindering our progress. Only by collectively working together, with nature and with people, will we discover ways of resolving our global environmental quandaries.

June reminisces back to a summer where:

> We had a medicine women on our second trip...The night before they left...we did a peace pipe ceremony. What was so unique about this was that, whether you call it worshipping or whatever, what their belief does is it thanks the God for the four directions. Each direction has some significance, you know, fire, water...some major part of the world, and then for relationships. It was so interesting and she explained that it's not only relationships with each other but relationships with the Earth and that they are one and the same.

Thus, in June's opinion, promoting environmental awareness goes far beyond being good to the Earth. It extends into our meaningful relationships with each other.

Another important aspect of a wilderness trip, for June, is that of allowing the participants to reassess their stature in the world. That is, to realize how insignificant we really are, in the greater scheme of things. Our feelings of superiority and domination quickly subside as we paddle past, or hike, looking about in awe at canyons and rock walls which have outlived us for hundreds of thousands of years. Realizing what a tiny part of the Earth we actually represent allows us, in some ways, to connect with something much larger than ourselves. That, in fact, our self is not limited to our physical being but can expand far beyond it. A feeling of self-transcendence emerges in which the boundaries of self expand.

Despite the inspiration for change which can be gained from wilderness experiences, June is certainly aware of how difficult it is to maintain a sound environmental ethic once having returned to our everyday lives. Even she admits to bowing to the pressures of societal expectations and demands and, thus, emphasizes the importance of returning back to the wilderness as often as possible in order to reaffirm and strengthen her beliefs.

Our governing consciousness is still one in which we see ourselves as separate people, living in separate worlds, encircled by barriers and competitors (whether it be nature or our neighbour). We need to learn to live with each other and with the Earth. Not until we learn to trust, to have faith and to know that we are all parts of a greater whole, will we truly overcome our global problems.

Table 6 Thematic Description of Ned's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Leader's Continual Growth
- Evolution of leader's personal philosophy
- Realistic expectations
- Importance of leader's value and belief framework
- Sense of hope

Creating a Bond with the Natural World
- Instilling an attitude
- Value shift
- Reflection time
- Emotional and spiritual impact
- Teachable moments
- Sense of oneness

Interaction and Processing of Experiences
- Discussion leads to understanding and appreciation
- Planting questions
- Relaxed environment
- Mutual respect
- Repetition
- Follow up

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Making the Connections
- Transference
- Rejecting human centredness
- Changing pre-set values
- Two separate realities
- The 'real' world

Ned has 17 years of experience working in the wilderness travel field. He has been involved in both educational and recreational capacities and has led trips throughout all seasons of the year, although he tends to concentrate on the spring and summer months. Ned has spent quite a bit of time consciously thinking about, and questioning, humanity's relationship to the natural world and, as a result, has developed a sound philosophy of life with which he feels very secure. He firmly believes, however, that this questioning process should be perpetual, for all of us, as the world is continually changing and, thus, we inevitably need to change along with it. As eloquently proclaimed by Sparkes (1991), "It has become almost a truism to say that the only permanent thing in this world is change" (p.1).

When asked about his outlook towards fostering environmental awareness on his wilderness travel trips Ned communicates:

> Yeah, it's something I consciously try to do. But it's funny, you know, there's no real way to do it and so you're kind of just diving in there blind and hoping that you affect somebody. It's very much, I think, an affective kind of thing right now. It's very emotionally driven. Cognition comes into it at some point but largely I think people will end up doing things because it's part of their values and they care. If there was no emotion behind it, there would be nothing. On my trips I'm trying to get across both, affect and knowledge...You know lots of research has been done in terms of advertising and showing that repetition is one excellent way of selling something. So that sort of begs the question are we out there to sell something? I guess in a way we are, because it's a way of thinking. We may think that this is right but there have been some notable folks who don't agree with us.

> Nonetheless, it's just a way of thinking, and in some ways I think it is something we have to sell.

Ned's Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

Leader's Continual Growth

Over the years, Ned's views towards promoting environmental awareness on his trips have developed and altered alongside the evolution of his personal philosophy regarding the natural world. As his own knowledge and awareness of the Earth continues to grow and change, so too do his methods and ideas towards fostering environmental awareness. As Ned reminisced:

> It used to be a whole lot easier, I think, than it is now. The reason I say that is because first of all there wasn't all that much knowledge to pass on. It was, you know, don't take a crap in the water. Extremely basic types of things....At some point I realized that there's not just life in the city and life on a canoe trip and that they should be treated so separately. Maybe that was somewhere buried under the compost of my consciousness but it was kind of neat that it came to the surface and that I was all of sudden aware of it...So I began to try to impart an attitude that somehow connects our wilderness lives to our other lives. An attitude that would hopefully infuse their thinking and, therefore, their behavior.

The attitude which Ned tries to bestow is one which, in the long run, will hopefully allow us to re-establish a culture that approaches harmony with the Earth. Hence, some fairly radical changes would be in order.

Experience has led Ned to adjust his expectations about how much of a lasting environmental ethic people will realistically gain from his trips. In his words:

> Often what I've found is that it's certainly not the kind of thing that people can say, "revelation, I all of a sudden believe like you do!". It's such a huge jump in thinking that there's no way. And I think that when I first started doing that kind of thing, in some ways, it was kind of disappointing that people weren't just born again. But now I realize that it's a pretty big jump in values; a pretty big shift in values. A pretty big jump in how you actually approach something and the beliefs that go along with it, and that they're certainly not, at the end of the conversation, going to, you know, sign any type of contract in blood anywhere.

Having realistic expectations of what can be accomplished on a single wilderness journey is necessary if, as wilderness guides, we are to maintain optimism towards the potential of our trips. We are but one piece of the puzzle, one part of a much greater whole. Nevertheless, Ned still feels that he is fulfilling a meaningful role since:

> The whole process has to start somewhere...Maybe they will have that type of personality where they can take it on their own and run with it. Maybe they will show the interest if you get in touch with them about it later. Maybe, maybe. It's the same sort of thing as hoping to be able to achieve anything...You do it because there's hope of something sparking, but it's certainly not complete.

Ned clearly demonstrates that the bridge between hope and confidence is faith in himself and in his beliefs.

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

As previously mentioned, Ned's objective, in terms of advancing an environmental ethic, is that of instilling an attitude as opposed to merely teaching low impact camping techniques. "The whole idea behind it is that it would be nice to be able to say that the types of things that they learn can be internalized and taken to the rest of their lives as well". This attitude would hopefully result in some sort of significant value shift on an individual level, and eventually, on a societal level. What we need is an attitude of respect and consideration for all other parts of the whole. That would consist of quite a bit other than ourselves. The natural world is a community of which we are part, not merely a world of objects. In order for humans to find their appropriate place in the world we will need to give respect to the diverse interests of all other beings, for we live in a world of beings that count.

Allowing participants some time alone to reflect upon the world and develop a sense of oneness with the Earth is of importance to Ned:

> I am a proponent of being away for a little while from the group. It gives them a chance to focus on something else. If you reduce all the social stimulus then what's left is thought and reflection...So, what I mean is, often you'll end up thinking about or reflecting on your situation and your immediate environment. That's good. That's needed.

This type of reflection may lead the participants to contemplate the idea that our privileged position in the world, most commonly attributed to being the victors of the evolutionary struggle, may instead simply be due to the fact that we are the ones making up the rules.

Ned feels that the possibilities for participants to be influenced in emotional or spiritual ways are endless on wilderness travel trips. 'Teachable moments' are abundant and we need to take advantage of them. Regrettably, Ned perceives that many outdoor leaders do not use these moments simply because:

> Not all leaders recognize them. I don't think everyone takes advantage of teachable moments because it may not be their focus. It may not be something that they're extremely interested in, the environment. I know that that's the case with me in other things. Like sort of cultural/historical teachable moments would pass me by. They're not necessarily as important and I don't focus on them much.

Consequently, in order to be most effective in our efforts, advancing the environmental message needs to be at the forefront of our thoughts and priorities. Equally, Ned acknowledges that recognizing these 'teachable moments' improves over time and with experience. He knows:

> people who are much better at recognizing those types of moments and, what have you, than I am. Sometimes I think I'll never get that far. I often recognize them after the fact. That happens to me a lot of times. And I think that that's gotta be one of the ways that we grow in, that is by recognizing, you know, that you missed the turn and then thinking that if a similar situation comes up then it twigs again, maybe we don't miss it by as much. And then next time maybe we don't miss it at all.

Although Ned is hopeful that a wilderness environment can help in allowing people to develop a sense of oneness with their surroundings, he is also cognizant of the fact that it is by no means a change which people can be forced or coerced into. In his words:

> Really people have to develop that almost themselves. You can help out by making the experience pleasant, in terms of comfort; by positive reinforcement when they do mention that type of stuff. But I certainly don't think that you can take someone by the hand and say, "look at all this gorgeous stuff. Don't you feel connected to it? Or don't you think you should?" No, it has to happen for them individually and at their own level.

Interaction and Processing of Experiences

Much of Ned's efforts in this realm revolve around interaction, interaction with each other and with the Earth. Essentially, the discussions which he engenders revolve around the 'whys' of being environmentally conscious. Hence, instead of simply putting forth information regarding what we are to do and how we are to do it, Ned concentrates on explaining and discussing why it is indeed the best thing to be doing. How will our actions affect the world directly or indirectly? How will they affect our lives in the greater scheme of things? How can we anticipate and prevent the deterioration of ecosystems instead of fruitlessly trying to react and cure the problems once they have arisen?

Ned views his role, in this capacity, as that of being the devil's advocate. In doing so he hopes to plant a seed with the participants in getting them to question their own values, beliefs and commitments. Ned will continually challenge, in a non-threatening way, everyday statements which are said automatically, and often without much thought. "You know, when someone says something about the damn mosquitoes, or if someone says something about how beautiful it is. Those are two extremely common ones".

For Ned, these discussions occur most frequently around meal time or any other such relaxed time of day. Being attentive of these opportune times for interaction is a key element if the message is to be seriously contemplated by the participants. In other words:

> When somebody is pounding down the portage with 400 pounds on their back and you know some sort of anthropocentric thing is said, well you usually just sort of let it go rather than stopping them there on the trail and saying well don't you think...Because they're not going to be all that receptive! So usually around meal times. You know, we're either preparing supper or finished breakfast or something more relaxed and more disposed towards discussion and thought.

The success of these conversations is dependent somewhat on the rapport which has been previously established with the participants. Feelings of mutual respect need to be felt by all those involved if the discussions are to be meaningful. Ned recognizes that he needs to respect where the participants are coming from if he is to even hope of them respecting his opinions. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. For example, "if I had someone who was a Grand Wizard of the KKK, I'm not going to be too worried about trying to convert them because it would be more like pounding your head against a brick wall!"

Repetition and follow-up are two aspects of fostering environmental consciousness which Ned believes need to be highlighted. If his wilderness trip is the only occasion on which the participants are placed in a situation which brings them to question their values and beliefs, it may not have much of an enduring impression. As Ned verbalizes:

> My belief is that it's a starting point but they'll need to have more input all the time. If it's just one thing it's easy to ignore. But if it's something that comes up a few times in the next little while in their lives, and that's not to say that over a two week trip you bring it up eight times because then they might get more turned

> off, but if it comes up a few times in the next year for them that may start a wee bit of a shift in the way that they think about things because they're being forced to think about it a little bit more.

Following up on the questions which have been planted throughout the trip is equally important, although it is probably not common practice. Perhaps the job doesn't end once the trip is over. Ned admits, however, that this additional responsibility would be difficult to implement for several reasons. As Ned ponders:

> It gets pretty hard. What are you going to do? Maybe we should get people to sign up for, or commit themselves, for three summers. If you sign up for this trip you have to come for three years in a row. That's unrealistic, but boy would it be effective. I guess there are other ways you can follow up by giving them a call afterwards and encouraging them to get in touch with a specific organization. Then you can get back to them , you know, so have you done that? Maybe inviting them out to some sort of thing that you're involved with or what have you. Even sending them an article or sending them...Just following up. But that's really tough because if someone doesn't show that interest you're kind of overstepping your bounds a little bit under the guise of that kind of experience.

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

Making the Connections

Ned believes that it is critical for participants to internalize the environmental message and effectively transfer it to the rest of their lives. The gap between our wilderness experience and our everyday lives needs somehow to be bridged. At times this seems to be somewhat of a momentous task. Much of it depends on creating the beginnings of a value shift towards ecocentrism and rejecting egocentrism, on an individual level, or anthropocentrism on a societal level. In Ned's words, "we have to start taking a look at, making decisions, and following up on those decisions with actions based on what is the good of the ecosystem and not what is the immediate benefit for humans".

Ned is often surprised at how little the participants really understand about the workings of the world within which they live. In many ways we have become so separated and removed from the natural world that we barely understand our connection to it; natural concepts that were probably just taken as common knowledge in other societies are now rarely appreciated. While thinking back to a winter ski trip with a group of teenagers, Ned recalls how little they grasped about the interactions of the natural world:

> So naturally what would happen is that you would have these sort of bare patches around the trees , you know, and a rock or what have you. So I stopped the group and asked if anybody knew what the heck was going on. You know, why was it this way? Why didn't the snow just melt evenly?..It was interesting to see. The knowledge of their physical world was limited to the city, I guess. You know, snow melted because the graters came and pushed it away and people shovelled it out evenly over their lawn as far as they knew.

Our future on this Earth may depend greatly upon our ability to re-establish these connections to the world within which we dwell, to disclaim the view of nature as being separate from human civilization.

Part of Ned's mission is to enable participants to notice the ironies of what they consider to be the 'real' world; that world of cities, towns and technologies which has removed us from the very source of our being. In Ned's opinion, even though many modern technologies have been introduced into the wilderness experience it is, nevertheless, much more representative of the 'real' world to which we belong.

A world with people in it cannot completely persist as wilderness, and the metamorphosis is not entirely to be regretted. But does humanity have the right to transform the world to the degree which we have? Nature has worth that is independent of humans and goes beyond human interests. Accordingly, it is essential that humankind discover a balance in a world of living balances.

CHAPTER VI

THE CO-RESEARCHERS' COMMON TREK

Overview

Reflecting upon the co-researchers' experiences led me to discover that, in terms of fostering environmental awareness, each individual explorer chose the most appropriate way for themselves to attain the summit. In the end, however, they were clearly ascending the same mountain. Although each roamed over unique terrain, together they also wandered through common territory. The intent of this chapter, therefore, was to further examine this commonly explored ground.

Table 7 provides a summary of the co-researchers' individual routes in their attempts to foster environmental awareness. The themes arising from each of their descriptions are identified by an 'X' in the table.

Table 7 Summary of the Co-Researchers' Experiences

	Alpine	Scott	Joey	Robin	June	Ned
Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality						
Creating a Bond with the Natural World	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interaction and Processing of Experiences	X	X		X	X	X
Humans' Impact on the Environment	X	X		X	X	
Leader's Continual Growth	X	X	X	X	X	X
The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences						
Wilderness Immersion Leads to Appreciation	X				X	
Moving Beyond the Limitations of Traditional Learning	X	X				
Overall Impact of the Experiences	X		X	X	X	
Making the Connections		X	X	X	X	X

The Common Territory

It becomes evident, upon examining Table 7, that the co-researchers travelled along fairly distinctive trails. Unmistakably though, their ventures also led them through common territory; their singular routes did indeed converge. The co-researchers' collective journey is displayed in Table 8, providing a summary of the themes found to have repeatedly surfaced in all of their experiences. Also included in the table are themes which recurred for five out of the six co-researchers, as it was felt that the consistent appearance of these topics was significant. These individual co-researchers were approached and interviewed a fourth time in order to verify whether these assumptions were correct. In each case, the co-researcher in question agreed that the theme was indeed a vital part of their experience.

Table 8 Summary of The Co-Researchers' Common Experience

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

- Creating a bond with the natural world
- Interaction and processing of experiences
- Leader's continual growth

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

- Making the connections

It is apparent, from the above table, that a common thread wove its way through all of the co-researchers' experiences. A discussion of this commonly explored territory follows.

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

> *"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."*
>
> *Aldo Leopold*

All the co-researchers were very explicit in communicating that the message they attempted to convey on their trips encompassed not only cognitive information, that is knowledge pertaining to methods of treading lightly on the land, but also, and of greater consequence, were their aspirations of influencing the affective dimension of the participants. Their efforts were oriented towards inspiring deep feelings of morality, feelings for what is right and what is wrong, regardless of our societal inclinations. Sharing a moral concern for humanity is insufficient when other species and ecosystems also have intrinsic moral significance.

The co-researchers realize that there isn't any way at all in which we can avoid influencing, and sometimes harming, the interests of other beings. Yet that should in no way be used as an excuse for being lulled into believing that we can simply proceed to do whatever satisfies our desires. To live effectively, we must fulfil our own well being needs, but not at the expense of the rest of the system. We need to learn to live in harmony and balance with ourselves and with the surrounding world. Morally, we ought, as best we can, to allow all entities of the world to flourish.

The co-researchers shared these beliefs by encouraging participants to create a bond with the surrounding natural world; by inspiring discussion and reflection around these feelings, as well as through their own continual growth as wilderness leaders.

Creating a Bond with the Natural World

In aspiring to help people gain a sense of oneness with the natural world, the co-researchers were, in many ways, attempting to eliminate the myth of dualism. Western societies have a deeply rooted sense of a destructive duality between humanity and the natural world; a conventional dichotomy between subject and object, where we are the subjects and the rest of the world a collection of objects. For some, the imagination may stretch to include animals as subjects, however, trees, ecosystems and so forth would never be envisioned as anything other than mere objects. The whole notion of nature as detached from human experience is a misrepresentation (Naess, 1989). Humans and nature are reciprocally interrelated. As Joey conveyed this:

> We objectify. We think of ourselves as being separate entities and we think of ourselves as being in that positivistic sense. We tend to pull ourselves apart from our environment. We need to begin to see ourselves as part of that living environment. No separate; not a user mentality; not with a consumer mentality but with a - the word escapes me - the idea that we live at one with the environment...As soon as I come into the environment, I become a part of it. The environment is there because of my perception of it. And my perception of it also makes the environment real.

The co-researchers are thus seeking to formulate a vision in which humanity is not opposed to nature; in which we are no longer subjects with the surrounding world as our object. They realize the need to break down the boundaries between ourselves and the natural world, thereby perceiving that each side makes sense only if it considers the other.

The co-researchers endeavoured to supplant these feelings of duality by encouraging participants to seek out a sense of comfort and harmony with the elements of the surrounding environment. For example, the co-researchers did not merely try to teach the identification of various trees and plants but, more importantly, were trying to educate towards granting these beings due respect, as well as an understanding of the critical roles that they play in our lives.

In most nomadic human cultures, hunter-gatherers live in harmony with the natural world. This natural world was also home to many spirits who gave meaning to their daily lives. Thus, their home could not be defined as wilderness. This principle remains a cardinal commitment among modern aborigines who still live in the hunter-gatherer tradition. As stated by Chief Standing Bear, of the Ogalala Sioux:

> We do not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills and the winding streams with tangle growth as 'wild'. Only to white man was nature a 'wilderness' and ...the land 'infested' with 'wild' animals and 'savage' people...There was no wilderness since nature was not dangerous but hospitable, not forbidding but friendly. (Standing Bear, Land of the Spotted Eagle, 1933, quoted in Nash, 1982, p. xiii)

It was not until early in the seventeenth century that the harmony with which hunter-gatherers lived in the wilderness of the Americas was shattered as the European immigrants treated out the natural world as an adversary to conquer and overpower.

These newcomers viewed the Canadian forests as the enemy to be feared and fought (Oelschlaeger, 1991). The state of the natural world today would indicate that this sense of fear still underlies our perception of the natural world, leading us to believe that we need to dominate over, and be superior to, that world (Fox, 1991). Hence, in attempting to facilitate a link between our everyday lives and the natural world, the co-researchers were attempting to counteract the prevailing anthropocentric attitude.

Allowing for the return to natural rhythms, thereby ridding ourselves of the imposed artificial construct of clock time, was also crucial in establishing a sense of oneness with nature. Clock, or linear time, is merely a human construct, one which we mistakenly, unconsciously and steadfastly endorse (Kohak, 1984). Allowing this fabricated schedule to dictate our everyday lives inevitably creates unnecessary anxiety, tension and pressure, while increasingly distancing us from the rhythms of our inner nature. Natural time, on the other hand, flows with the cadence of the natural world (Potter, 1993). Regaining this natural rhythm can only help in enlightening us to our relations with the natural world. June supported this in saying:

> Just the slowed down pace of the trip gets people thinking more about themselves and about our relationships with the world. The seed is planted...Once they get more into a natural rhythm they finally get relaxed...All of a sudden they don't have to be run by society anymore.

Enabling participants to engage in some quiet, reflective time was also viewed as essential in trying to instill feelings of harmony. Silence is the stream that flows beneath all differences of language and unites us. Again, June remarked:

> On a trip when you get to a spot that is just totally awesome, you feel so small and I think that there should be time where there's just silence. And I think that

> that silence is them looking and feeling very much a part of the world without having to say anything...Their time in society is never alone for many of them. Or not alone where they can experience a relationship with the world. You need that time to reflect. You have to have that time to turn inwards, to connect.

Interaction and Processing of Experiences

> *"You do not learn by doing...you learn by thinking - acting - thinking - acting etc. In and of itself, doing, like experiencing, can be a mindless affair."*
>
> *Sarason, 1984*

The co-researchers involved in this study did not hold much faith in our traditional teaching methods whereby individuals are urged to simply memorize and regurgitate information. These leaders were not seeking to preach or impose their opinions and beliefs on the participants. Shor (1980) describes this type of teaching as "innately Utopian, humanistic and interactive, in sharp contrast to the pragmatic, programmed and mechanistic modes predominant in mass education" (p. 97). Instead, the co-researchers led by inquiry, posing questions and encouraging participants to reflect and think critically. Voicing their thoughts was also pivotal. Situations were sought where different views could be articulated without fear of ridicule. Listening to and discussing assorted perspectives, while encouraging participants to maintain an open mind, allowed them to assimilate ideas and perhaps adapt their outlooks. Scott, for example, when around a campfire would often:

> Bring up certain topics of conversation, like overpopulation. I try to throw questions at them and let them discuss and think about them. I'm not giving them

> the answers. I'm letting them all just toss around their own ideas, and saying whether they are right or wrong. That way they open up more. They question themselves more. It becomes more meaningful to them.

Shor (1980) supports this process in saying, "the teacher...accepts responsibility for a process which converts students from manipulated objects into active, critical subjects. This empowering conversion is the result of re-perceiving the world" (p. 96). The co-researchers were not pursuing answers or forcing participants to take up positions. In contrast, they were indicating a direction for them to explore, a different path to wander.

Indeed, it even could be suggested that the co-researchers adopted a phenomenological approach to teaching. They actively encouraged participants to endorse the percept of 'returning to the things themselves' (Husserl, 1931). In doing so, they were aspiring to enable the participants to rid themselves of their taken for granted meanings, and inspire them to understand the natural world in a meaningful way *on its own terms*. Consequently, the participants would hopefully come to the realization that "human existence and the world constitute a unity, a unity so vital and basic that either one is absurd and inconceivable without the other" (Colaizzi, p. 54).

The co-researchers discovered that when people are immersed into the wilderness they often begin to question their own beliefs relating to their everyday lives. Creating opportunities for individuals to express these thoughts, in one form or another, was emphasized. "Dialogue is critical in criticism-stimulating activity" (Shor, 1980, p. 98). Something that is never spoken about has a tendency to become vague and fade away. Conversation itself gives secure meaning to ideas which may previously have been fleeting or vague (Berger & Luckman, 1966). Discussion continually modifies and maintains our sense of reality. Concepts are added and discarded, weakening some aspects and fortifying others. In fact, "the most important vehicle of reality maintenance is conversation" (Berger & Luckman, 1966, p. 152). These authors subsequently communicate that, "on the whole, frequency of conversation enhances its reality-generating potency, but lack of frequency can sometimes be compensated for by the intensity of the conversation when it does take place" (p. 154).

For many, these exchanges provided enlightenment towards how the underlying framework of our society, the very culture itself, has in many ways continued to distance us from the reality of the natural world. As aptly expressed by Potter (1993):

> Our materialistic, progressive society desensitizes people to values and experiences which otherwise could enrich the quality of their lives. Here, it often becomes the norm to ignore or forget values that are conducive to living a meaningful existence and instead focus on what we perceive to be 'progress'. Unfortunately, this 'progress' is more often an impudent construction of our artificial reality of leisure and affluence in isolation from, as well as destructive to, our natural world. (p. 160)

Equally important, was enabling the participants to make sense of these alternative thoughts, and of the experience as a whole. For the co-researchers, a good deal of the work involved helping participants to unlearn what they had previously learned and to devise opportunities to return to harmonious relationships. The leaders can only provide directions to the various ways of climbing the mountain. In the end, it is each individual that must select the most suitable path to ascend.

Leader's Continual Growth

A key word for the co-researchers was that of 'growth'. They encouraged both the participants and themselves to continually evolve in their understandings and actions. Learning was viewed as an unending, dynamic process. In inspiring others to question deeper parts of their souls they also managed to keep that spark alive in themselves. The co-researchers equally believed learning to be a two-way street. They would agree that "the teacher's conviction that she or he can learn important things from the students is a keystone of this process...education [is] an ongoing process of life - a state of being rather than a course in an institution" (Shor, 1980, p. 105).

All the co-researchers had witnessed changes in themselves, over time, as wilderness leaders. As their value and belief frameworks evolved towards ecocentrism, so too did their personal philosophies with regard to promoting environmental awareness on their wilderness trips. None of these leaders thought that this maturing process had, or would, reach an end. All were cognizant of how important the ***process*** of growth had been and looked forward to its continuation. Although each co-researcher had a personal, and strong, environmental ethic by which they lived and travelled, they were all also open to further learning, realizing that if they allowed themselves to become stagnant in their beliefs their message would no longer be coming from the heart, thus, rendering it ineffective. As June declared:

> I definitely believe that as leaders we have to have our philosophy in our hearts and in our souls. Talking about it is one thing, but if you can't demonstrate to others that you feel it and live it, then it's of no use at all. And, if you want them to think about changing, then you have to be open to that possibility as well. I'm

starting to feel really comfortable with my thoughts now, but I also know that they're continually changing, and I expect to keep growing.

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

The co-researchers held a common conviction about the importance of wilderness travel experiences. These excursions offer unique opportunities and have the potential to open doors which otherwise would remain closed.

The co-researchers posited that first hand experiences with the natural world had the potential of affording the participants a different way of viewing the world, one in which humans are not separate or superior to it. Their hope is that first hand experiences will enable participants to perceive not how things ought to be, but how they are, and how and why we ignore them as they are (Watts, 1966). Their intent is to reveal that "however much we divide, count, sort or classify [the world]...into particular things and events, this is no more than a way of thinking about the world. It is never actually divided" (Watts, 1966, p.54).

The co-researchers perceived their trips as essential in starting the questioning process. They also came to realize, however, that although their wilderness excursions were a key step in the process, they were by no means ends in themselves.

Making the Connections

One of the most powerful themes to have emerged from the co-researchers' experiences was that of establishing, or re-establishing, some meaningful connections:

connections between wilderness and an everyday life, relationships between ourselves and to the surrounding natural world, and a link between our inner nature and the outer natural world.

Our human centredness has blinded us to the idea that we are part of an interconnected whole. Our everyday urban based life has been constructed in such a way that we now view ourselves as separate from, and superior to, the natural world. Accordingly, it would only seem natural to assume that humanity should dictate and impose its will upon nature in order to create a better world.

Humankind has grown isolated from nature. Experience has become artificial. Science and technology have drastically reconstructed human lives. As expressed by Kohak (1984) "our world of artifacts may be no more than the thinnest layers covering the rhythm of living nature, but it is that layer that we confront in our daily existence" (p.13). Whereas at one time the natural world powerfully influenced our daily lives, it now has very little direct influence on us. Listening to forecasted weather, on the radio or television news, has become the most important daily characteristic of nature for a majority of people. The co-researchers maintained that humankind need to regain a sense of how our constructed urban environment connects to the natural one surrounding it. The greater the sense of continuity between the elements of their everyday lives and the new elements of knowledge gained in the wilderness, the more readily these elements would acquire the accent of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). As Berger and Luckmann suggest, assimilating a new sense reality is much like learning a second language:

> One learns a second language by building on the taken-for-granted reality of one's 'mother tongue'. For a long time, one continually retranslates into the original language whatever elements of the new language one is acquiring. Only

> in this way can the new language begin to have any reality. As this reality comes to be established in its own right, it slowly becomes possible to forego retranslation. One becomes capable of "thinking in" the new language". (1966, p. 143-144)

The co-researchers collectively believed that wilderness experiences enabled participants to shed much of their artificially constructed 'reality' and reconnect to the natural world. Immersed in the wilderness, it is easy to ascertain the direct consequences of our thoughtless actions. Transferring these lessons back to our everyday lives is pivotal to understanding that our careless endeavours have repercussions for the natural world regardless of whether or not they are directly observable. However, as Scott suggested:

> As leaders, we probably don't spend as much time as we could transferring these things that we've learned back to everyday life situations. I'm as guilty as most. We definitely need to think about that aspect more.

Wilderness travel may also allow participants to discern how truly insignificant we are in the greater scheme of things. Our sense of superiority and domination are reduced to size in situations where the natural world dominates over us. Feelings of awe and inspiration created by the splendour of the surrounding environment may help in acknowledging our true vulnerability. This thought is somewhat paradoxical as on the one hand the participants would become aware of the grandeur of their surroundings yet, at the same time, realize how insignificant they are. As Reed (1989) would argue:

> There are more important things than humanity, things that awe and stupefy us with their longevity, their imperturbability, and their indifference to us. Encountering them...we recognize that they have vast, non-human greatness and value; values that we do wrong to threaten. (p. 65)

In this statement Reed expresses the need for humanity to recognize the grandeur of the natural world while maintaining a disassociation from it. Although several co-researchers commented on the necessity of being in awe of the natural world, their eventual hope would be that these feelings of wonder would allow humankind to realize their true place **within it**, rather than remaining **apart** from it. For them, the importance of realizing our insignificance lay in the idea that, in doing so, we could then connect with something much larger; expand our boundaries and identify with a greater self. It involves opening to the nature within, thereby viewing ourselves as intrically interconnected to the natural world. As Watts declared:

> The head and the feet are different, but not separate, and though man is not connected to the universe by exactly the same physical relation as branch to tree or feet to head, he is nonetheless connected - and by physical relations of fascinating complexity. (p. 73)

This larger meaning of Self is one of the principle ideas suggested by Naess' Ecosophy-T. As Naess (1993) voiced:

> We become our fullest selves when we empathize with the world in its widest sense, when we feel compassion for the near and far reaches of the natural world, when we recognize this feeling and are not afraid of it. (p.130)

It is this understanding of Self that the co-researchers ultimately strived to communicate.

Equally important, however, was the concept of somehow empowering the participants, and themselves, to maintain these new connections once having returned to the pressures of their daily existence. Without reinforcement from other sources time would likely wear away the concern for, and appreciation of, the natural world (Potter, 1993).

In trying to identify with the natural world we may also come to understand that "the things in the land fit together perfectly, even though they are always changing" (Lopez, 1986, p. 405). The co-researchers thought that in trying to pattern our lives after the natural world humans could gain insight into the proper ways of balancing relationships amongst ourselves, as well as with the natural world. In other words, "we must learn to include ourselves in the round of cooperations and conflicts, of symbiosis and preying, which constitute the balance of nature, for a permanently victorious species destroys, not only itself, but all other life in its environment" (Watts, p. 70).

The Construction of a Wilderness Based Understanding of Reality

It is pertinent to clarify, and expand upon, an underlying concept which has repeatedly been referred to in the description of the common thread running through all the co-researchers experiences': that is, the notion of an understanding of reality based on wilderness experience.

Our understanding of reality is constructed from the meanings we attribute to the objects in our lives. A taken for granted common sense of reality is shared by inhabitants of the same worldview. There is an ongoing correspondence between individuals' pre-negotiated meanings, if they share such a common sense of reality. Our everyday life reality is our paramount reality (Berger & Luckman, 1966).

The experienced reality of everyday life is taken for granted as *reality*, until its continuity is disrupted by the emergence of a problem. If the understanding of reality in everyday life is unable to integrate the problem, it would then transcend the boundaries of this everyday view of reality and we would have to develop a different conception of reality. A wilderness travel excursion is a novel experience in which new views and understandings of the natural world may arise. These new meanings could, therefore, lead to the construction of new and expanded sense of reality; a wilderness reality. As expressed by Berger and Luckman (1986), "compared to the reality of everyday life, other realities appear as finite provinces of meaning, enclaves within the paramount reality marked by circumscribed meanings and modes of experience" (p. 25).

Berger and Luckman (1966) also suggest that the reality of one's life is focused around "the 'here' of my body and the 'now' of my present" (p. 22). On wilderness travel excursions the "here and now" is no longer the context of everyday life, but a unique first hand experience of the natural world. The immediacy of this novel world and the physical distance of the usual everyday life world allows the wilderness to become predominant. This represents "a reflective detachment on daily life [which] is a means to push yourself away from the ordinary by pushing the ordinary away from you. This is the starting point of separation, which allows a transformation process to begin" (Shor, 1980, p. 99). Participants come to realize that meanings attributed to the world in their everyday life no longer apply. This was clearly noted by June:

> They start thinking about their individual lives at home and how much of a rat race they're in and how much it's an individual, me oriented, society and how much we totally forget, once we get back into our rat race, that anything exists beyond our own little life, getting to there, getting to here. The slowed down pace of the trip gets people thinking more about themselves and about their relationships with the world.

These outdoor leaders encouraged participants to renegotiate meanings and understandings of their everyday life. In doing so, their ambition was to assist the participants in their transition to a wilderness context.

Tension arose when reminders of the everyday life reality interfered with the new wilderness context. This feeling was illustrated in Alpine's comment:

> On one of my river trips, where we were going down the river and we came into a gravel bar, or a bank, and we found discarded cans, bottles, rubbish. It immediately triggered an anger response in the participants...It happened in another situation also, where we came to a campsite where there's a whole bunch of other people. The impact of crowding, or feeling that all of a sudden you're not in this area and you're not enjoying it on your own anymore. All of a sudden there's a bunch of strangers around. We lost the feeling of that nice union, or oneness, with the wilderness seemed to be disrupted.

Tension also ensues upon return to the everyday life. The clashing of the two worlds makes it very difficult for individuals to maintain the meanings and interpretations which had been established in their experience of the wilderness. The participants would require confirmation of their new conceptions in their everyday lives, if they are to maintain their expanded sense of reality. The co-researchers themselves acknowledge difficulty in this area. As June conceded:

> Again, I get frustrated with what I guess you would call our weakness, in that as soon as we get back into the city [although] we try to live the lifestyle that we're talking about [an ecocentric lifestyle], in a lot of ways we get sucked in too. And I guess that's one of the main reasons why I want out of the city very badly. You get here and, I don't know, you lose your ability to live what you're talking and you can try as hard as you want but you're still up against society.

Scott observed that while he does his best to bring home what he has learned in the wilderness, he also tends to slip back into that other reality. "You do the best that you can but we can't help but be influenced by the radio, the newspaper, and our friends. We tend to slide back in, almost unknowingly, into the everyday humdrum urban lifestyle". Ned, too, remarked:

> Again, the whole sort of system that we've got set up doesn't encourage people like me being able to do that kind of thing [live an ecocentric lifestyle]. Because even if we are concerned, you know, if you make a hundred bucks a month it's hard to go out and buy the really expensive types of non mass produced goods that you need to be able to do that, to live that way. So the system that we have is prejudiced against that type of lifestyle at the moment. Those damn California tomatoes are a hell of a lot cheaper!!

Although the co-researchers voiced concern about the level of symmetry, or continuity, between their everyday life and their wilderness experience, to a greater or lesser extent, been able to infuse their everyday life with the values of their wilderness travels. It has only been through repeated first hand experiences with the natural world that the co-researchers were able to somewhat secure their expanded wilderness values as a foundation for their everyday lives. As Scott explained:

> We know the wilderness is important and we keep going back on weekends or whenever to get that experience, to feel rejuvenated, to experience that wilderness reality so it can help underlie our everyday lives...They will always be two separate realities, but we as leaders have to be able to connect them, to transfer them properly. That's really difficult to do. I think it's something that I'm continually changing, adapting and learning as I go along...Probably the very best way is the

> way we do it. We keep going back to the wilderness to keep getting those feelings back.

Hence, the dilemma remains that of being able to integrate the two worlds which have conflicting values.

The notion of alternate experienced realities will be further expanded upon in the following chapter, when dealing with the proposed Transitional Model.

Summary

This study revealed that the co-researchers' lived experiences of promoting environmental awareness were characterized by the need to create a bond with the natural world, making necessary relevant connections, both the participants' and the leaders' continual growth, and the importance of interaction around, and processing of, the wilderness experiences. It is important to underscore the idea that 'promoting environmental awareness', for these co-researchers, entailed much more than simply teaching participants to tread lightly on the land. Although minimizing our physical impact was considered important, in and of itself, the co-researchers agreed that it was insufficient. The co-researchers' main thrust was not one of imposing a forceful and constricting code of behavior, but rather one of encouraging participants to view and experience the natural world in a different light, thereby assisting in the unfolding of an ecological consciousness. Hence, their aim was not to dictate a set of 'moral oughts' but, instead, to transform their perceptions of, and attitude towards, the natural world. The participants were invited to experience a more expansive sense of self. All co-researchers experiences coincided with Naess' statement:

> I'm not much interested in ethics or morals. I'm interested in how we experience the world...If deep ecology is deep it must relate to our fundamental beliefs, not just to ethics. Ethics follow from how we experience the world. (quoted in Fox, 1986, p.46)

Consequently, in Fox's (1990) words, the co-researchers offered:

> their approach as a realistic positive option (ie. an approach that one *can* take and that one might *want* to take) rather than as a morally or logically established obligation (ie.as an approach with which one ought to *comply*). (p.243)

The preceding phenomenological analysis uncovered the various layers of experience and the different structures of meaning within the co-researchers' attempts to promote environmental awareness. A description of the investigated phenomenon was formulated in the following concise statements of the identifying features of the experience.

Promoting environmental awareness involves:

- Educating participants about necessary techniques which should prevent further degradation of natural areas; that is, teaching individuals to tread lightly on the land.

- Dispelling the myth of dualism and encouraging the feeling that we are a part of, and not apart from, the natural world; thereby renegotiating our taken for granted meanings.

- Developing a sense of humility and grasping our insignificance in the greater scheme of things; understanding that the world does not revolve around humanity.

- Inspiring an understanding of our need to move in accordance with the flow of life, rather than countering our own nature or that of the surrounding world.

- Awakening the perception of how our everyday constructed experience of reality has removed us from the natural world, as well as from the nature within.

- Providing insight into the fact that our everyday life and our wilderness experience are not separate but coexistent. Our destructive actions have direct consequences regardless of which we are in.

- Encouraging critical, thoughtful and moral questioning and reflection rather than preaching. There are no magic solutions.

- Moving towards a deeper understanding and awareness of the underpinnings of our environmental problems and away from shallow, superficial and temporary fixes.

- Realizing that it is not a matter of putting an end to concepts such as 'growth', 'progress' and 'success' but rather redefining them.

- Transmitting the understanding that the thing for us to do is to find our way in the world while giving due consideration to the diverse interests of other beings.

The preceding statements are the foundations for, and not a full articulation of, a deeper sense of ecological consciousness.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRANSITIONAL PATH

Overview

Having uncovered what constituted 'promoting environmental awareness' for the co-researchers, the original study question has been answered. From the answer, however, emerged a number of equally compelling questions. It would have been difficult, at this point, to abandon the journey, leaving so much unexplored. There remains much more terrain to be covered. Some areas, I realize, will have to be left for future journeys. One particular direction, however, entices me to continue onward. It is a path deserving further exploration. If others have roamed there, their impact is far from discernable. This phase of the journey involved searching for an understanding of how humans can realize the transition from the typical anthropocentric outlook to the ecocentric outlook fostered by the co-researchers. The search itself guides one both inward and outward. My wandering has led me to the Reality Transition Model explained below.

The Reality Transition Model

The Reality Transition Model gradually evolved as my journey progressed. As I ventured into deeper realms of understanding I began to perceive the existence of different experienced realities and wondered how, or if, these were interconnected. Equally, I speculated as to how one could achieve the passage from one way of being to another. In requestioning the co-researchers, and re-examining their thoughts, I pondered on how their experiences had led them to shift into different ways of experiencing reality. Hence, the Reality Transition Model was designed in an attempt to bridge this gap in our understandings.

The model, therefore, embodies the co-researchers' experiences of journeying from one sense reality to a larger one. As the research progressed, it became quite evident that the co-researchers were all at different points along a continuum, moving in the direction of ecocentrism. The Reality Transition Model is very dynamic in nature as the co-researchers demonstrated that they were continually renegotiating their sense of the world. My personal, educational, and experiential background along with my values and beliefs have also influenced the conception of this model. It is, in part, an expression of my personal philosophy towards the natural world. As this philosophy continues to grow and evolve, so too will the model.

Berger & Luckmann (1966) define reality as "a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition" (p.1). For the purpose of this model, conceptions of reality are described as the meanings attributed to objects in our environment which enable us to make sense of our world.

Figure 1 provides an illustration of the Reality Transition Model and the various elements which shape it. The three conceptions of reality (Anthropocentric reality, Sapiens Separation reality and Symbiotic reality) and their identifying premises revolve around our sense of place. It is important to note here that the model in fact represents a continuum; that is, the areas between conceived realities are grey areas, and not black and white distinctions. The model also embodies the idea that passage from one conceived or experienced reality to another is contingent upon first hand experiences with the natural world. Table 9 displays the components of the Reality Transition Model in further detail.

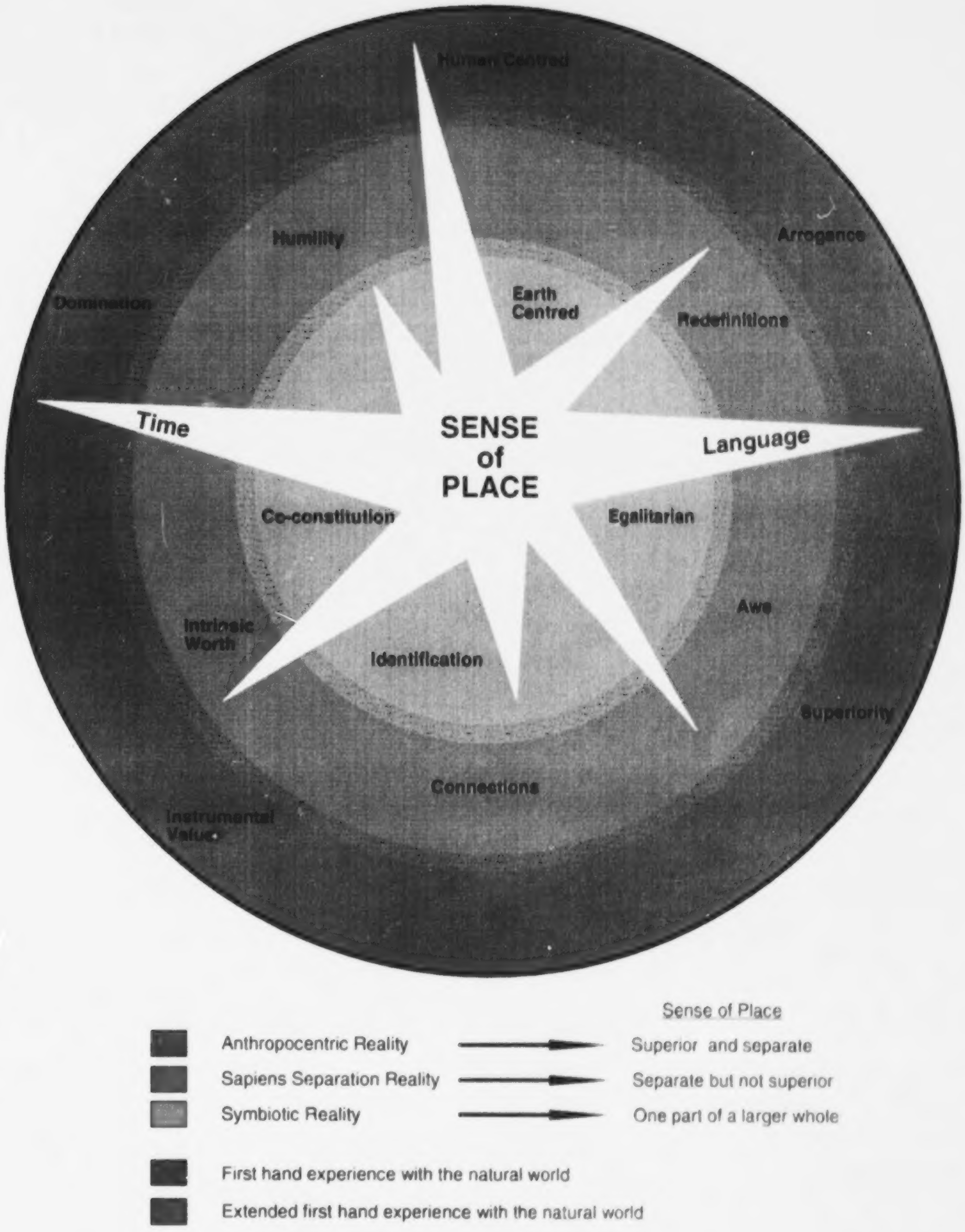
Human Centred
Humility
Arrogance
Domination
Earth Centred
Redefinitions
Time
SENSE of PLACE
Language
Co-constitution
Egalitarian
Awe
Intrinsic Worth
Identification
Superiority
Connections
Instrumental Value
Sense of Place
Anthropocentric Reality → Superior and separate
Sapiens Separation Reality → Separate but not superior
Symbiotic Reality → One part of a larger whole
First hand experience with the natural world
Extended first hand experience with the natural world

Figure 1. The Reality Transition Model

Table 9 Components of the Reality Transition Model

Sense of Place in the greater scheme

The Anthropocentric Model of Reality

- **Human centred** focus
- **Domination** over the natural world
- **Instrumental value** of the natural world
- **Superiority** over all other entities
- **Arrogance** towards all other entities

The Sapiens Separation Model of Reality

- Feelings of **humility and awe** in relation to the natural world
- **Intrinsic worth** of the natural world
- **Redefinitions** of predominant concepts
- **Connections** between realities

The Symbiotic Model of Reality

- **Earth centred** focus
- **Co-constitution** of humans and the natural world
- **Egalitarian** relationships
- **Identification** with a greater Self

The transformation of **time** over conceptual-perceptual realities
The transformation of **language** over conceptual-perceptual realities

First hand experience with the natural world
Extended first hand experience with the natural world

Sense of Place

The core of the Reality Transition Model is our sense of place in the greater scheme of things. As demonstrated by the schematic representation of the model (Figure 1), Sense of Place radiates through the three spheres and, thus, is pertinent to each conceptual-perceptual model of reality. Our sense of place does not merely represent our physical surroundings or habitat, but alludes to a sense of belonging, an understanding of relationships in terms of our place in the greater scheme.

I would argue that our deepest understanding of reality revolves around how we perceive our relationship with the natural world. Consequently, our sense of place alters significantly from one conceptual model of reality to the next. By way of illustration, individuals who maintain a 'developer' attitude, perceiving themselves as superior to and separate from the natural world, would have no moral quandaries about exploiting the natural world for short term human gain. Afterall, the natural world is merely a collection of resources for human use. On the other hand, individuals who uphold the deep ecology movement plarform principles see themselves as only a small part of a much greater whole and would strive to not wantonly injure another part of that world as in doing so they would inevitably be hurting themselves.

Unearthing what we believe to be our true position in relation to the natural world, would enable us to identify which conceptual model of reality we are presently dwelling in.

The Anthropocentric Model of Reality

This model of reality focuses on the supreme importance of human beings. It is believed that humans are fundamentally separate from, and superior to, the natural world. The attitude that we can master and manage the natural world is pervasive. Our technological and scientific achievements are viewed as proof of these feelings of superiority and, thus, it is concluded that our progress can continue without limit.

Arrogantly, humans are deemed as the crown of evolution. The Earth is viewed in utilitarian terms; that is, it is seen as a collection of natural resources for human purposes and consumption. There is no doubt that, ultimately, humans will survive all ills. Humans do not believe that other natural entities have value in their own right. They only have instrumental value for human concerns, projects and interests. Nature is merely the physical matter of technological practice and alteration (Naess, 1989).

Accordingly, there is an inherent sense of dualism within this model of reality. The human/nature dichotomy is in fact a subject/object dichotomy. We are the subjects, and the rest of the natural world is viewed as our objects. Humans, therefore, have complete control over all objects and believe that they are the only beings capable of managing the Earth.

> The management of nature results in the imposition of our anthropocentric purposes on areas that exist outside of human society. We intervene in nature to create so called natural objects and environments based on models of human desires, interests, and satisfactions. In doing so we engage in the project of the human domination of nature: the reconstruction of the natural world in our own image, to suit our purposes. (Katz, 1992, p. 271)

The Sapiens Separation Model of Reality

The Sapiens Separation model of reality is based upon the 'Man Apart' concept proposed by Peter Reed (1989) in his article entitled Man Apart: An Alternative to the Self-Realization Approach. This approach suggests that it is our very separateness from the Earth that would compel us to want to do right by it. Realizing the depth of the gulf between humans and the natural world would enable us to recognize that there exist values in nature which stand completely independent of what humans value as beautiful or good. By turning our attention away from ourselves and towards a universe which is vast beyond our ability to comprehend, we might treat the Earth a little less arrogantly.

Reed's reasoning is founded primarily upon the works of Martin Buber (1944) and Rudolf Otto (1959). Coming from a theological perspective, Buber and Otto's works deal chiefly with God and not nature. Reed, however, suggests that their work provides insight into how to relate ourselves to other beings and, thus, is appropriate when discussing our relationships with the natural world.

Buber and Otto both intimate that there is an Other, something that stands fundamentally apart from humankind. In Buber's terminology, there are two ways in which we can relate to this Other: "I-It" or "I-Thou". Typically, we tend to relate to the natural world in an I-It fashion; that is, we tend to believe that the world is full of objects *for us.* If, however, we were to relate to the natural world as a *Thou*, that is something wholly other and inspiring, we would treat that world accordingly (Reed, 1989).

The Sapiens Separation model of reality, therefore, emphasizes the virtues of intrinsic worth and feelings of humility. Treating the natural world as a Thou, a wholly other, leads to the understanding that things matter independent of whether humans think they matter. There is intrinsic value in nature which lies independent of whether we perceive it or not. As expressed by Rodman (1977) "all natural entities have intrinsic worth simply by virtue of being what they are" (p. 108). The natural world has intrinsic worth which lies beyond humankind. And, therefore, "inhuman nature in its towering reality" inevitably arouses feelings of obligation to the Earth (Reed, 1989).

I would suggest, as did Peter Reed, that an I-Thou relationship is most easily entered into in situations where nature is dominant. Silently paddling through 3000 foot vertical canyon walls that have been evolving over hundreds of thousand of years will most likely leave you with a sense of awe and reverence for that natural world. These feelings of respect lead to the recognition that the natural world is worthy in and of itself. These encounters would probably also generate feelings of humility. Realizing that in relation to other features of the natural world, we are fairly insignificant in the greater scheme of things and, therefore, morally we would do right to treat the natural world with respect.

Grasping the meaning of humility and intrinsic worth would consequently allow for redefinitions of predominant concepts within our model of reality. From an anthropocentric outlook 'progress', for example, is conceived as "living better electrically, acquiring more machines, eating exotic foods, travelling faster..Progress is living "high on the hog" for the largest possible percentage of the human population, using more and more energy and processing more and more materials from the Earth's crust" (Rowe, 1990, p. 64). Within the Sapiens Separation model of reality, progress would be redefined along the lines of achieving a means of coexistence with the natural world where care is extended to that wholly Other. 'Success' and 'growth' would become far more related to quality of life rather than quantity of material possessions.

The Sapiens Separation model of reality is best summarized in Reed's words:

> There are more important things than humanity, things that awe and stupefy us with their longevity, their imperturbability, and their indifference to us. Encountering them as Thous, we recognize that they have vast, nonhuman greatness and value, value that we do wrong to threaten. The gossamer Milky Way and the unmoving stars are still beyond us and above us, and they teach us of the Other that is not man. This Other, however, is also the curve of a petal, the delicate lattice of a diatom's shell, things we can easily crush. Faced with such values, the appropriate human virtues are self-restraint, hesitation, a respect for the mystery of the world, and a willingness to leave it at that. (1989, p. 65)

An important feature of The Reality Transition Model is the notion that in order to enter into the Sapiens Separation model of reality one must participate in a first hand experience with the natural world. It was evident from the co-researchers' descriptions that 'promoting environmental awareness' on wilderness travel excursions entailed trying to alter the participants' outlook on the world; hence, trying to introduce a new experience of reality. Although many of the co-researchers themselves have gone beyond the Sapiens Separation model of reality, all would agree to having passed through it. Before they could become one with the natural world, they first had to develop a sense of awe, respect and humility in standing apart from it. Ideally, the co-researchers would hope that participants would take part in further wilderness travel experiences so as to be able to move beyond this Sapiens Separation model of reality. Realistically, however, many may not. Nevertheless, feeling a sense of moral obligation or responsibility for the natural world is a step in the right direction.

I would propose that this Sapiens Separation model of reality, which can be attained through wilderness travel experiences, can in many ways **coexist** with our everyday sense reality. A crucial part of the outdoor leader's job would be to highlight potential connections between these two models of reality and facilitate an understanding of how aspects of the Sapiens Separation model can be maintained within their daily lives. So that upon return to urban life there would be greater resistance to allowing the everyday life Anthropocentric model of reality to take over.

Whereas Reed (1989) conceived 'Man Apart' as an end in itself, I would argue that the Sapiens Separation concept of reality is only one step in the process to ecocentricity and realizing the ecological self. The ability to respect the natural world while standing apart from it precedes the realization that we are in fact a part of that world. I would suggest, based on the co-researchers' experiences as well as my own, that Sapiens Separation is a phase which we must all first go through in order to even aspire to entering and understanding Symbiotic Reality. Inspiring feelings of identification with the natural world would symbolize passage into the Symbiotic model of Reality.

The Symbiotic Model of Reality

Symbiosis is a common attribute of mature ecosystems, where interdependence is realized for the benefit of all. The tenet underlying the Symbiotic model of Reality is that ultimately it may be possible to develop a more expansive sense of belonging, an ecospheric belonging (Rowe, 1990). Within this model of reality, the natural world would be viewed as source rather than resource.

The Symbiotic model of Reality includes what Naess (1989) terms Self-realization. Regardless of which term is used, the belief is that humans need to *identify* with the natural world so that they can experience it as an extension of themselves. This entails moving from our narrowly boundaried sense of ego self, which is based on subject/object and human/nature dualisms, towards the realization of a greater ecological Self (with a capital s) in which humankind forms a union with the natural world. Hence, protection of the natural world would be protection of ourselves (Drengson, 1988). Here, our sense of dualism would be replaced by that of symbiosis and reciprocity: An indissoluble interrelationship between humans and the natural world.

Identification is the process through which one can realize this expansive sense of Self. Many authors have commented upon, and endorsed, this concept:

> From the point of view of deep ecology, what is wrong with our culture is that it offers us an inaccurate conception of the self. It depicts the personal self as existing in competition with and in opposition to nature...[We thereby fail to realize that] if we destroy our environment, we are destroying what is in fact our larger self. (Matthews, 1988, p. 354)

Macy also (1987) remarked:

> Indeed, I consider that this shift [to an emphasis on our "capacity to identify with the larger collective of all beings"] is essential to our survival at this point in history precisely because it can serve in lieu of morality [taken for granted morality] and because moralizing is ineffective [when built upon blind faith]. Sermons seldom hinder us from pursuing our self-interests. It would not occur to me, for example, to exhort you to refrain from cutting off your leg. That wouldn't occur to me or to you, because your leg is part of you. Well, so are the trees in the Amazon basins; they are our external lungs. We are just beginning to wake up to that. We are gradually discovering that we *are* our world. (p. 20)

Many of the co-researchers attempted to impart this greater sense of Self with the participants on their wilderness trips. Their ultimate goal was to encourage and expand a sense of ecological consciousness. According to Sessions (1981), "ecological consciousness is the result of a *psychological* expansion of the narrowly encapsulated sense of self as isolated ego, through identification with all humans, to finally an awareness of identification and interpenetration of self with ecosystem and biosphere" (p. 5a). Devall (1988) also noted that:

> Exploring ecological self is part of the transforming process required to heal ourselves in the world. Practicing means breathing the air with renewed awareness of the winds. When we drink water we trace it to its source - a spring or mountain stream in our bioregion - and contemplate the cycles of energy as part of our body. The "living waters" and "living mountains" enter our body. We are part of the evolutionary journey and contain in our bodies connections with our Pleistocene ancestors. (p. 42)

Although many of the co-researchers attempted to bestow this expansive sense of self upon their participants, I would argue that their efforts were fruitless unless the participants had already developed an understanding of the natural world's intrinsic worth and feelings of humility prior to this excursion. As previously mentioned, the Sapiens Separation phase is an integral part of the process and cannot be overlooked. It may, however, vary significantly in its duration.

If this sense of identification can be achieved it would inevitably lead to an Earth centred, egalitarian outlook on life; a philosophy which would, in principle, allow all entities "the freedom to unfold in their own way unhindered by the various forms of human domination" (Fox, 1989, p. 6). The 'in principle' clause is inserted because the survival of any species is going to involve some killing and suppression. Like any other entity, humans are allowed to alter the ecosystem in which they live in order to survive in a way that is simple in means and rich in ends. However, they are not entitled to unnecessarily threaten the natural world. As observed by Eckersley (1989):

> It is not inconsistent for humans to act in their own self-defense by keeping in check or eradicating life-threatening organisms *where there is no alternative* (and when the action is taken with reluctance). However, it *is* inconsistent when the activities of humans wantonly or needlessly interfere with or threaten the existence or integrity of other life forms, when humans no longer see themselves as plain members of the biotic community, but assume instead the role of planetary directors who have discerned the true path of evolution and hence determined what should be the destinies (or non-destinies!) of other life forms and entities. (p. 114)

The Reality Transition model further suggests that passage into Symbiotic Reality experience can only occur through repeated and extended first hand visits to the natural world. Although this extended experience should be fostered, it is possible to conceive that, for many, this reality will remain inaccessible. I would also intimate that, whereas I proposed that aspects of the Sapiens Separation model of reality could coexist with the Anthropocentric model, this would not be the case upon entering the Symbiotic reality. Many of the co-researchers commented upon the conflicts they encounter when they return to their urban lives. An Earth centred life simply cannot survive within the frameworks of an anthropocentrically oriented society. In order to sustain this value commitment, it must become one's paramount everyday life reality. Commitment to ecocentrism will empower an individual to make the necessary radical changes in their lifestyles so that the practice of symbiosis can persist in their everyday lives.

Time and Language

Our conceptions of both time and language would alter significantly as we proceed from one model of reality to the next.

When dwelling within the Anthropocentric model of Western technological culture time is understood in terms of linear, non repetitive, mechanical clock time. Time is a construct of schedules which give direction and purpose to our lives which is no longer in accordance with our natural rhythms. As expressed by Kohak (1984):

> For the sake of managing our environment purposively...a natural time reference is, admittedly, not overly effective. Bodies tire at different rates, the darkness comes unevenly in valleys and on mountain tops, under clouds and on a bright day. Here an ideal time-construct, visualized as a uniform sequence of consecutively numbered moments providing an arbitrary but common reference, serves the special purpose at hand far more effectively. It does not, to be sure, articulate any experience: nowhere does such a time line exist in nature. The idea of 1800 hours on 6 June 1981 is a pure artifact, a construct imposed upon nature's rhythm, subordinating and ordering it. (p. 16)

Within the Anthropocentric model difficulty arises when we perceive constructed clock time as a description of the true nature of reality. Much to our dismay, stopping the clock will not stop a natural event. As Kohak again communicates, "the construct becomes problematic when we apply it beyond the scope of its original intent" (p. 17).

An illustration of this dilemma is our technological system we call 'life support'. Which gives rise to the question, "when is the right time to die?". The 'right' time can only be conceived within the framework of natural time; everything follows a cycle. There is a time to be born, a time to live and a time to die. When living and breathing within the confines of linear clock time, an endless continuum of identical moments, the idea of a 'right' time to die becomes meaningless (Kohak, 1984).

As witnessed by the co-researchers in this study, wilderness travel excursions allow for increased awareness of natural time. Time is understood as circular and repetitive. The subtle pull of the cycling of the sun, the moon, the tides and the seasons would provide the necessary guidance. There is no arbitrary "o'clock" in this world. One returns to our natural sense of temporality and away from the illusory human-made construct of mechanical time. An entry in a group journal by a participant on one of my northern trips expresses this feeling well:

> Today was an important day. It was, by my rough count, our fifth out here, and I think by now we've reached this sort of tacit understanding with ourselves that our lives involve red and yellow canyons, the hot breezes of evening, gentle rain, and a river of olive water. I won't presume to say that we're all the better for it, but I can say with a good degree of certainty that time doesn't mean as much to us today as it did yesterday, or the day before. We eat when we're hungry, sleep when we're tired, and wake up when we're ready. We're no longer camping but living outdoors, and I for one could keep going all summer, commanded by urges and desire and simple duty.

This excerpt also captures the idea of how time slows down on a wilderness trip. Within the Anthropocentric model of reality we control time. Instant gratification is the norm and waiting is viewed in a pessimistic light. On a wilderness trip, however, the natural world has its own time that we can't control. Patience is in order; one can only wait for the rain to stop or the sun to rise.

Language consists of a system of symbols of the concepts with which we make sense of our world. As expressed by Berger and Luckmann (1966), "the language used in everyday life continuously provides me with the necessary objectifications and posits order within which these make sense and within which everyday life has meaning for me" (p. 22).

As we journey from one experienced reality to the next, our sense of place in the greater scheme of things changes drastically. Hence, our relationship with the natural world undergoes a metamorphosis. A critical outlook towards language is, therefore, important since our words and phrases can channel our thoughts if they carry with them past meanings of another way of seeing reality. The language we use can perpetuate misconceptions by encouraging a traditional view of the world and constraining our reactions in times of changing experience (Rowe, 1990). On the other hand, the meanings of words can be redefined or redeveloped in order to best encapsulate the appropriate connotations.

As we reevaluate our relationship with the natural world, old words and expressions can prevent our progress. "They are awkward in the presence of novel experience and tug our attention back to conventional ideas and modes of thought" (Rowe, 1990, p. 149). Accordingly, when progressing from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism, one would need to renegotiate new meanings for old words. The word 'nature', for example, represents entirely different concepts within each model of reality. As observed by Rowe (1990):

> How shall we convey the ecological truth that people are not wholes but inseparable parts of Nature when that word has frequently been applied to the other-than-us, the wild, rough and crude, its meaning steeped in apathy, suspicion and even hatred?". (p. 150)

McMullen also illustrated this point well in saying:

> Several months ago there was a piece of marshland up Island that the owner wanted to turn into a trailer park. The land was a breeding spot for water fowl and environmentalists fought to preserve the land in its natural state. In a news cast I saw on the issue one of the gentlemen interviewed regretted that the spot was going to be developed and then he shrugged his shoulders and said "but that's progress". A host of individuals would argue that the preservation of the land in its natural state would be actual 'progress'. It is at this point that the vocabularies to two opposing philosophies come into conflict. (p. 164)

When reevaluating our relationship with the natural world there will also be a need for becoming comfortable with unfamiliar words such as ecosystem and ecosphere.

As our thoughts towards the natural world evolve, so must our language. New thinking leads to new language. Within the symbiotic conception of reality nature is our home and "to be at home means asking ourselves about our intentions of staying on, about care of the furnishings and their maintenance, about sympathy for the other occupants and their welfare" (Rowe, 1990, p. 157).

Summary

The Reality Transition model was proposed in order to possibly further our understanding of the transition involved in progressing from an anthropocentric outlook to an ecocentric outlook on the natural world. The model synthesizes three different perspectives of reality and underscores the importance of first hand experiences with the natural world. Other underlying tenets of the Reality Transition model include the notion that in order to come to view ourselves as an extension of the natural world we must first be able to respect that world as a separate entity. This step in the transition is viewed as a crucial one and attempts to leap over this stage would be futile. The model also embodies the idea of the possible coexistence of different conceptions of reality and the importance of creating symmetry and continuity between our wilderness experiences and our everyday lives. Finally, it is suggested that the concepts of time and language would alter and evolve as we progress from one view of reality to the next. The state of the environmental crisis today urges us to renegotiate our relationship with the natural world. Hence, the challenge ahead lies in moving towards the symbiotic conception of reality.

CHAPTER VIII

A PATH WITH A HEART

At journey's end it is always beneficial to pause and reflect on the experience at hand, to become aware of, recapture, relive, explore and link together the various features of the experience, thereby engendering further meaning. As expressed by Csikszentmilhalyi (1990), "creating meaning involves bringing order to the contents of the mind by integrating one's actions into a unified flow experience" (p. 216). Accordingly, this chapter will provide the reader with a summary of this research journey. Practical implications of the study for outdoor leaders and recommendations for further research will also be proposed. Lastly, some final thoughts pertaining to the evolution of this journey will be offered.

The Nature of the Journey

Despite earlier warnings of how humans have interfered with the processes of the natural world, the state of the environmental crisis today indicates that we are still trying to find our way out of an ever increasing number of environmental quandaries. It is my belief that outdoor leaders of wilderness travel excursions can play a key role in influencing people's environmental outlooks. I believe, however, that our training as outdoor leaders, in this realm, barely scratches the surface of our potential. Hence, the main purpose of this study was to explore, and find meaning, in outdoor leaders' experiences of fostering environmental awareness on wilderness travel expeditions, in hopes of helping to heal our split from the natural world. All the co-researchers, who chose to participate in this study, were committed to ecocentric values; that is, to living in harmony with the Earth. Hence, they steadfastly endorsed promoting environmental awareness as a significant part of their lives and not merely as part of their job.

The Significance of the Journey

The concept of eco-tourism is gaining widespread recognition as "an enlightening nature travel experience that contributes to conservation of the ecosystem, while respecting the integrity of host communities" (Wight, 1992, p. 3). Proponents of this type of tourism believe that it can play a significant role in providing incentives for nature conservation by stimulating local economy and, at the same time, establishing and preserving a system of protected areas. These would be areas which might otherwise be developed or devastated through improper management and short term exploitive resource development. There are also, however, several paradoxes surrounding the concept of eco-tourism which create grounds for dismay.

It is my belief that the role outdoor leaders play in eco-tourism ventures is a vital one, for it is they who deal first hand with how the participants relate to the natural world. Eco-tourism experiences 'theoretically' involve an educational component. It is unfortunate that many outfitters who purport to be offering eco-tours are merely trying to attract a larger market and are actually tendering adventure travel packages. However, for those who truly are concerned about the natural world and wish to engender that concern in others, while at the same time giving something back to the environment, eco-tourism may be a viable option.

This journey through outdoor leaders' experiences provides concerned leaders and outfitters with a larger knowledge base to work from in terms of fostering environmental awareness on their trips. Hence, this research contributes to the field of eco-tourism by providing an in-depth look at what the outdoor leader's role, in this realm, can potentially involve. It has been demonstrated to encompass much more than merely teaching low impact camping skills and basic ecological concepts. Furthermore, it generates concern for outdoor educators involved in the preparation of developing outdoor leaders. This study would suggest that perhaps their learning should include a much greater emphasis on ideas relative to fostering and encouraging alternative ecocentric perceptions and understandings of the natural world in order to empower them with to dispel our typical anthropocentric outlook and to encourage participants to view the natural world in a deeper more expansive way.

The Journey and its Discoveries

Six co-researchers agreed to participate in the study. In-depth interviews were performed with each individual co-researcher in order to ascertain first their commitment to an ecocentric worldview, and second to explore in-depth their experiences of fostering environmental awareness on wilderness travel excursions. The intent was to describe and unearth the meaning of 'promoting environmental awareness' for these ecocentrically oriented outdoor leaders.

By exploring and contemplating the paths chosen by these co-researchers, in their attempts to communicate an environmental message, we were provided with additional insight into what may constitute a path with a heart. The common themes which emerged from, and characterized the meaning of, the co-researchers experiences encompassed the following:

Instilling a Deep Sense of Morality

- Creating a Bond with the Natural World
- Interaction and Processing of Experiences
- Leader's Continual Growth

The Unique Potentials of Wilderness Experiences

- Making the Connections

Wilderness travel trips may provide unique opportunities in which to discover a deep, inner sense of belonging and understanding. Ultimately, they may contribute to enabling us to reach out and feel other dimensions of reality through which we may stretch our awareness of self to encompass the surrounding world. The co-researchers' common ambition was that of encouraging and facilitating a transformation in people's perceptions of their relationship with the surrounding natural world.

The findings of this study have contributed significantly to the foundation of knowledge which underlies outdoor leaders' comprehension of fostering environmental awareness on wilderness travel excursions and thus, has served its purpose: Concerned outdoor leaders are afforded a profound understanding of their potential in advancing a sense of ecological consciousness. The journey's discoveries also contributed the unfolding of the Reality Transition Model.

Implications for Outdoor Leaders

Throughout the course of this journey it became apparent that the co-researchers collectively held tremendous faith in the potentials of first hand experiences with the natural world. With their help, participants of wilderness travel excursions could begin to question and perhaps re-evaluate their place within the larger scheme of things. The Reality Transition Model would suggest, along with most of the co-researchers, that wilderness travel experiences may open doors to novel experienced, conceptual realities. The remoteness of their everyday life world along with the 'here and now' immediacy of the wilderness world can enable the participants to enter the larger world of wilderness. The co-researchers encouraged feelings of awe, respect, interdependence and humility towards the natural world in order to help in the renegotiating of meanings of objects in the novel environment. Ultimately, feelings of identification, co-constitution and a larger sense of self may transpire from repeated first hand encounters with the natural world.

Outdoor leaders need to understand the importance of these first hand experiences in terms of fostering ecological consciousness. Wilderness travel excursions, that entail an educational component, are perhaps an ideal time to encourage a different outlook upon the world and to redefine old concepts. First hand experiences are necessary if people are to develop a deep sense of appreciation for the Earth; otherwise their knowledge will remain remote and theoretical. Although the wilderness environment is crucial to any conceptual transition, the outdoor leader's role in the process is also vital. As some co-researchers suggested, outdoor leaders may wish to consider incorporating specific types of situations into their wilderness travel experiences which will engender strong emotional responses in their participants. For example, views from awe inspiring vistas along with scenes of human destruction (i.e. clearcuts) may be integrated into the experience.

The outdoor leader's inspiration and belief framework are central to creating a meaningful experience. The co-researchers in this study firmly believed that in order to awaken a love and concern for the natural world in others, we must first feel it ourselves. It needs to come from our hearts and our souls, and not merely out of a book. The importance of our personal example will help ourselves and others to grow more fully aware of our oneness with the natural world. In order to transmit this type of understanding to others, the co-researchers agreed that they themselves needed to regularly spend extended time in the wild in order to develop a firmly rooted and consistent ecosophy. Outdoor leaders must see in every participant the potential for a deep appreciation of the natural world, while being sensitive to their different perspectives so as to be able to tailor the situation to their needs. A meaningful part of our role as leaders is to help the participants in taking the next step towards greater awareness.

It is of pivotal importance that outdoor leaders encourage and stimulate situations in which the participants can voice their new questions and feelings. Communicating new ideas and thoughts facilitates making them more tangible and concrete. Expressing their ideas and listening to others, within a non-threatening environment, are critical steps in the transformation process. However, in the end, each individual must be allowed to choose their own path. This path should be one which they have chosen from the heart and not one which they have been forced to travel.

One of the outdoor leader's foremost responsibilities is to assist the participants in realizing, and clarifying the possible coexistence of, different conceptions and models of reality. It is of capital importance that the participants learn the significance of, and the need for, transferring the newly established meanings back to their everyday lives. Highlighting areas of continuity and symmetry between these two worlds will help in empowering the participants to maintain the newly found essences of their wilderness world within the framework of their everyday lives.

The concept of eco-tourism is an intriguing one. Whether the idea will prosper or succumb to its inherent contradictions remains to be seen. While the co-researchers involved in this study did not all perceive themselves as being a part of true eco-trourism ventures concerned outdoor leaders can, nevertheless, fulfil a worthwhile position with people who want to take vacations that possess more meaning than merely having a good time. They can teach them as they travel and allow them to explore both the inner and outer realms of nature. In order for this view to prosper, education must be included within both the leaders, and the outfitters' personal and professional mandates. We must realize, however, that eco-tourism is but one component of a multi-faceted picture.

Recommendations for Future Research Journeys

Considering both the present state of the natural world, and the growing popularity of eco-tourism, the potential and need for research in this area is tremendous. Consequently, I propose the following recommendations for subsequent research journeys:

1. Future phenomenological studies may wish to include outdoor leaders who profess varying ideologies in order to confirm suggested differences in their methods of promoting environmental awareness, and to strengthen the findings of this journey.

2. Inquiry is needed into the practical situations and methods by which ecocentrically oriented outdoor leaders attempt to alter the participants' perspectives of the natural world, so as to ascertain the most appropriate teaching methodologies for fostering an ecological consciousness on wilderness travel trips.

3. Comparisons of trip lengths, leadership styles, modes of travel, and degrees of wilderness remoteness need to be examined in order to suggest optimal conditions for concerned outdoor educators/leaders and eco-tourism operators.

4. Research also needs to be conducted with the participants of eco-tourism trips in order to determine whether or not the leaders are indeed instrumental in altering individuals perspectives of their relationship with the natural world, and to further the development of the Reality Transition Model.

5. In this light, further research should continue to explore the Reality Transition Model in order to confirm the notion of the Sapiens Separation model of reality as being an integral step in the process to Naess's Self-realization, rather than an end in itself.

6. Long term investigations need to be performed in order to discover whether or not participants are able to interpret and maintain the coexistence of their different models of reality. Data could be generated at six month intervals for several years following the completion of a trip. On this note, future journeys also should concentrate on discovering the most appropriate and successful methods of transferring the newly found meanings back to the participants everyday lives.

Some Final Thoughts

Exploration of the wilderness [is] a voyage into the interior of the self.

William James

As this leg of my personal journey draws to a close, I cannot help but reflect back upon the area explored. As I have ventured through this untouched area I have come to better understand myself. The motivations behind my thoughts and actions, often perceived as peculiar to outsiders, have become much clearer to me. The long discussions with the co-researchers, the weeks spent reading the thoughts of others, and the quiet times alone in natural places have all contributed immensely to my personal and professional growth, as my eyes have been opened to others who inhabit a reality very similar to my own.

I have come to understand that my seemingly endless questioning of self and others is a good thing. In the past I have found myself doubting whether the extra effort was worth it. This journey has restored and renewed my faith in believing that the difference truly will make a difference. Although I am slightly hesitant to close this chapter of my life journey, I am also confident that this expedition will inspire and influence the next one. For every ending there is a new beginning and much wandering remains to be done.

The plight of the natural world can help us choose a new path. This path will necessitate a change in lifestyle without waiting for the activation of policies which would render such change more or less required. We cannot manage the Earth, but we can adjust our own lifestyles. It is possible to farm, build houses and chop trees without upsetting the harmony of the ecosystem affected. I, along with the co-researchers involved in this study, firmly believe that wilderness travel experiences, led by truly concerned and committed individuals, can play an important role in this transformation process.

Throughout this journey, I have not sought to argue but to see. My ambition is that the reader will pause and ponder upon the discoveries of this expedition rather than feel compelled to contest or concede. If you are inspired to ask questions of what has typically been taken for granted, feel assured that you are on the right trail; you too are searching for a path with a heart. On this I can only speak from my own wilderness in saying that we need to take the time to pause and reconsider our direction. On the whole, our thinking remains deeply human centred. I would suggest that we need a Galileo-like change in our perceptions of our true place in the greater scheme of things. Locating a path with a heart will involve unravelling some deeply help assumptions so that we can set aside our species selfishness and utilitarian bent in order to get in tune with the natural world. In doing so, we may be able to reconcile our human paths with the rhythms of the natural world. A path with a heart will offer models of harmony and balance and advance lessons on how to live. It will lead us to the understanding that when living inside an ecosystem, harmonious co-existence is more important than individual survival. There will be an inherent respect for the extreme diversity of beings capable of living together in a highly sophisticated web of associations.

As noted by Naess (1989):

> Some kind of 'back to nature' attitude must be nurtured. This does not imply that lifestyle and society will become too simple in relation to our great intellectual capacity. On the contrary, the relationships in a mature ecosystem are more

> composite than any mankind has mastered. With increasing understanding, increasing sensitivity towards internal relations, humans can live with moderate material means and reach a fabulous richness in ends. (p. 183)

There is no magic formula for getting from here to there. The transition will not be an easy one. In the end, however, it will have been better to have pursued the right path even if it was difficult to find one's way, than to have pursued a misleading path just because it was more distinctly marked.

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APPENDIX A

University of Alberta

Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies

Outdoor Leaders and Environmental Awareness

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: Healing our split from nature: A phenomenological exploration of wilderness travel leadership.

Investigators: Nicky Duenkel (439-9741) Dr. H.A. Scott (492-7173)

The purpose of this study is to gain an in depth understanding of what it like to promote environmental awareness on a wilderness travel excursion. You have been identified as an outdoor leader involved in wilderness travel, who is dedicated to preserving the wilderness. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Each subject will be interviewed three times. During these interviews you will be asked to describe your experiences of promoting environmental awareness on your wilderness travel excursions. These interviews will be audio-taped and later transcribed. In order to protect anonymity, the tapes and their associated transcripts will be assigned a pseudo name and locked in a filing cabinet. After the second interview the information gained from your participation will be made available to you, so that you may comment on the accuracy of the investigator's interpretation of your data.

The final research project, including anonymous quotations will be available to all participants, and will be presented as part of a Ph.D. thesis. The research findings may be published in a journal but the anonymity and confidentiality of the subjects will be ensured. Although there may be mo direct benefits to participants in this study, the research findings may contribute to outdoor educators/leaders understanding of the ways in which to promote environmental awareness.

Outdoor Leaders and Environmental Awareness
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

This is to certify that I, ______________________________ (print name) hereby agree to participate as a volunteer in the above named project.

I understand that there should be no health risks to me resulting from my participation in this research. The potential benefits of this research to me include increased self-knowledge. However, I recognize that there are potential risks involved when discussing personal issues (eg. feelings of embarrassment).

I hereby give permission to be interviewed, and for these interviews to be recorded on audio-tape. I understand that following the researcher's oral defense the tapes, transcripts and field notes will be destroyed. I understand that the information may be published, but my name will be kept anonymous and confidential.

I understand that I am free to refuse to answer questions during interviews. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and terminate my participation in this project at any time without penalty. I have been given the opportunity to ask whatever questions I desire, and they have been answered to my satisfaction. I acknowledge receipt of this consent form.

Signed,

________________	________________	________________
Participant	Witness	Researcher

____

Date

APPENDIX B

CO-RESEARCHER DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Co-researcher #

Age: Gender: M / F Residence: Rural / Urban

Education:

Wilderness travel experience: (ie. years involved, seasons, length of trips, educational/recreational focus, etc...)

Professional certifications:

Membership with environmental/wilderness associations:

Subscriptions to environmental/wilderness magazines or journals:

Question: Please reflect upon the following question in preparation for our next interview:

> What is it like trying to promote environmental awareness on your wilderness travel excursions? Try to reflect back on your own personal experiences while promoting environmental awareness in the wilderness and describe them to me as best you can. What are your feelings and thoughts towards those experiences? What were they like for you?

THANKS for your help!!

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

First Interview: Establishing the Outdoor Leader's World View (semi-structured interview)

1. What is your personal philosophy with regard to humanity's relationship with the natural world?
2. How do you envision humans fitting into the larger scheme of things?
3. How does your lifestyle reflect your beliefs?
4. What role do you see yourself playing with regard to helping people gain an ecocentric world view?

Second Interview: Phenomenology of experience (unstructured interview)

What is it like trying to promote environmental awareness on your wilderness travel excursions? Try to reflect back on your own personal experiences while promoting environmental awareness in the wilderness and describe them to me as best you can. What are your feelings and thoughts towards those experiences? What were they like for you?